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Arch. Clar.















A  
COMPANION TO THE TEMPLE;

OR,

A HELP TO DEVOTION  
IN THE USE OF  
THE COMMON PRAYER.

---

BY THOMAS COMBER, D.D.

LATE DEAN OF DURHAM.

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VOL. I.  
OF MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER.

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## DEDICATION.

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TO THE  
KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

DREAD SOVEREIGN,

THIS illustration of our church's liturgy being now complete, doth justly address itself to your royal patronage, as to the happy restorer and constant supporter thereof. And it is encouraged in this application by the late wonderful discovery which Heaven hath made, that those who with more noise than reason, out of interest rather than conscience, have opposed these excellent forms, are not only enemies to our divine service, but also to your sacred person and government. We now see that your royal father, of blessed memory, did



with great judgment and truth observe, that “one of the greatest faults of common prayer was its teaching them so often to pray for the king, to which petitions they had not loyalty enough to say Amen,” *Εικ. Βασιλ.* chap. 16. Whereas it is evident to all the world, that none are steadier in their allegiance than those who daily and devoutly use these forms, which are composed with the spirit of primitive loyalty, and contain so many affectionate prayers for your Majesty, that they are not only a blessed means of your safety by engaging Heaven to defend you from the designs of ill men, but make such deep and lasting characters of duty on the hearts of your subjects which duly attend them, that their loyalty is mingled inseparably with their religion, and no interest can ever wear off the impression. And since your Majesty is so eminently the defender of the faith of this church, and the maintainer of its pious and primitive worship, you can never want the protection of Heaven, nor the affections of those whose allegiance is founded upon principles of conscience, as it is in all the admirers of this our liturgy, to which if by these

discourses I shall gain any true friends, I am confident I shall make so many loyal subjects to your Majesty, and so may with the same labour promote the devotion of private persons and the public peace, the safety of the government at present, and the salvation of souls hereafter. And for the better obtaining these blessed ends, may the King of kings, who did so graciously restore your Majesty to us, and hath so miraculously preserved you hitherto, continue many and many years your most desirable reign over us: which is the unfeigned request of every due observer of these prayers, and his very particularly who is

Your sacred Majesty's

Most humble, most faithful,  
and most obedient subject and servant,

THO. COMBER.





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# PART I.

1

OF THE

## MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER.

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### SECTION I.

OF THE SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE PREPARATORY TO  
PUBLIC PRAYER.

§. I. PRAYER is not only an excellent means to obtain all blessings, but the very act itself is an elevation of the soul to contemplate the beauties of the Divine nature, that by beholding such transcendent perfections, it may learn to love, desire to please, and delight to imitate so great and exact a pattern; and consequently it is a duty of the highest concernment: for it is an honour and a benefit to us, and yet it is accepted by God as our homage, and the testimony of our observance. It is a high favour to be admitted to have familiar converse<sup>a</sup> with the King of kings, and a huge advantage to have so frequent access to the fountain of all goodness. But then it is difficult as well as fair, and requires so much attention and serenity, zeal and vigour, faith and love, reverence and humility, that it can neither be well done, nor kindly accepted, without some preceding preparation; for these souls of ours are so clogged with corruptions, disturbed with passions, and so constantly entertained with the vanities which

<sup>a</sup> Job xv. 4. *הוֹדוּ* Vulg. et *λία πρὸς τὸν Θεόν ἐστὶν ἡ εὐχή.*  
Angl. *Preces. Prop. sign. Col.* Clem. Alex. Strom. 7.  
*loquium familiare.* Drusius *Ὁμι-*



our senses present us with, that we find our minds pressed down, when we would lift them up to God. But as those fowls whose wings are not proportionable to the weight of their bodies, do usually run some paces before they can rise from the earth to begin their flight; so the Church directeth us, first to prepare our hearts before we begin to pray. The Jews are taught when they enter their synagogues, to stand silently a while in the posture of prayer, before they begin their devotion<sup>b</sup>; and one of their masters told his scholars, this was the way to obtain eternal life<sup>c</sup>. The primitive Christians had a preparatory preface to their public prayers<sup>d</sup>, as long ago as the time of the famous St. Cyprian. And we are appointed to exercise our souls in the meditation of these sentences of scripture with the exhortation subjoined, that we may thereby become more fit to pray. That illustrious heathen temple had this inscription in letters of gold, *Γνώθι σεαυτὸν*, that the worshippers, by a true consideration of themselves, might approach with all humility to their supposed deities. And surely it is more requisite for us who worship the true God, to reflect upon the vast disproportion between ourselves and him, which is as great as between finite and infinite, holy and impure; and so we may be convinced of the necessity of being most lowly and reverent before him. The frailties of our bodies, and the infirmities of our nature, the defects of our faculties, and the misery that cleaves both to soul and body, doth command us to be humble in the presence of God. But that which should lay us lowest of all in our own thoughts, is the remembrance of our sins,

<sup>b</sup> Buxtorf. Synag. Judaic. c. 5.

<sup>c</sup> Quum vultis orare, cogitate prius coram quo stetis. Dict. R. Eleaz. Talmud. tract. Berachoth.

<sup>d</sup> Sacerdos ante orationem præfatione præmissa parat fratrum mentes. Cypr. de Orat. Dom.

which do alone alienate us from God; for he that pitieth our miseries hateth our sins, and he that caused the leper to be banished out of the city, admitted the lame man to the Beautiful gate of the temple: Joshua himself cannot be heard till the sin of Israel was taken away, and he meets with a check in his devotion for presuming to pray before he had removed the accursed thing, Josh. vii. 10. Wherefore our spiritual guides present us with these admonitions to repentance, before we begin to pray, lest we should stumble at the threshold, and pray in vain<sup>e</sup>, while we remain impenitent; for there is a moral impossibility such prayers should prevail. The petitions of sinners are either an heap of contradictions, or a contexture of indignities against the God of heaven; for such men bewail that with their mouth<sup>g</sup> which they love in their heart, and ask forgiveness, where they are neither sensible of an offence, nor will own the pardon as a favour; they accuse themselves for that which they did willingly, and never condemned themselves for, but will reiterate upon the first opportunity: they require things that they hope he will not give, and if they ask any thing seriously, it is either inconsiderable or with evil designs, and so becomes a provocation<sup>f</sup>. Now, can an all-seeing eye discern this without indignation? Will not an almighty hand be lifted up to destroy them, who both delude themselves and mock the King of glory? But lest we should experience the truth of this in our eternal ruin, we are advised to a serious repentance, which will be the best harbinger for all our petitions: for if we see our sins, and feel their weight, (it is to be hoped,) we shall draw near with low apprehensions of ourselves and strong de-

<sup>e</sup> Psalm lxvi. 18; John ix. 31; Isai. lix. 2.

<sup>f</sup> Quæ nisi seductis nequeas committere divis. Pers. Sat. 2.

sires after God, with an high opinion of him, and a hearty love to him, with many fears, and yet many hopes; and who can be more fit to pray? What better foundation for those prayers which must reach as high as heaven, than humiliation and repentance?

§. II. Now the better to dispose us to pray in this manner, God himself is brought in speaking to us from sundry places of holy scripture: the voice of God brought our first father to repentance, Gen. iii. 9, and it will surely have the same effect on us, for who dare refuse when he invites that can pardon or punish, save or destroy? He begins first to speak to us in his holy word, to whom we are about to speak in our prayers; so that those who expect God should hear their prayers must hearken to his words, especially where the matter is so excellent and of so great concernment to us, as in these invitations to repentance from the mouth of God himself. It was therefore most prudently ordered, that we should begin with holy scripture; and for the particular sentences, I may say, they are the plainest and most pertinent that can be found in the whole book of God, which, though it be Divine in every part, yet that care is well bestowed which selecteth such portions thereof as are suitable to the occasion. And thus the reverend composers of the Liturgy, like skilful physicians, have walked in this garden of God, which is stored with remedies of all kinds, and have gathered the choicest and most useful, different in operation, but having the same effect, viz. to bring us to repentance. They have chosen many, yet they leave it to the discretion of the succeeding physicians of souls, to use such a sentence every day, as may suit best with their own and

§ Prov. i. 24. Deus S. B. nos preces nostras ei oblatas. Mid.  
vocat ad seipsum; si nos illius Tehil. Psal. cxvi.  
vocem audiemus, tum ille item

their people's hearts: which was done with great reason, both because of the various dispositions of men's minds, and also of the different temper of the same man at several times: some are ignorant, others negligent; some obdurate, others tender; some are confident, others fearful; and that which will pierce the heart of the same man to-day will not enter his skin to-morrow; that which will now cure the wound, another time neither will abate the pain nor stop the bleeding: and it may be worth our while to take them in pieces, and see for what kind of persons every one of them may be proper; so that if we come, as we ought, before the service begin, we may entertain the time with a meditation agreeing to our present disposition, and such as may put us into the best frame for true devotion.

*The Analysis of the Sentences.*

These sentences contain	{	1. Support to the fearful, §. 3.....	{ Psalm li. 9. Psalm cxliii. 2. Jeremy x. 24.
		2. Comfort to the doubtful, §. 4....	{ Psalm li. 17. Daniel ix. 9. Luke xv. 18, 19.
		3. Instruction to the ignorant, §. 5.	{ 1 John i. 8, 9. Ezekiel xviii. 27.
		4. Admonition to the negligent, §. 6.	{ Psalm li. 3. Matthew iii. 3.
		5. Caution to the formal, §. 7.....	Joel ii. 13.

*Of the Sentences proper for those who fear God's anger.*

§. III. If we consider how universally men have deserved the wrath of God, we shall find it necessary for all to fear before him; but if we again observe how exceedingly this fear dejects and discourageth a tender heart, it will seem necessary to apply a cordial. Now lest such be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow, or hindered in their devotions, let them meditate upon the following sentences.

Psalm li. 9. HIDE THY FACE FROM MY SINS, &c.] Holy

David was deeply sensible of his just deservings, and filled with holy fear; because, though God had promised to remit the guilt of his sin, yet he declared he would not let him go unpunished, 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14: however, he doth not run away from God, but rather makes a more earnest application to him, that he will please to pass by his offences and to spare him, which is here metaphorically expressed; 1. By hiding his face from his sins, that is, not considering them, (as the phrase signifies<sup>b</sup>,) not looking on them so steadfastly as to observe them, or so narrowly as to examine them; for if his pure eyes behold evil, his righteous hand must punish it. 2. By blotting them out, alluding to that book<sup>i</sup> wherein God is said to note those sins which he hath not forgiven: now David prays that this debt-book may be crossed, and the score blotted out, so as never more to appear against him. Let us then in our fears make the same request, and let it be our first and chiefest care to get our sin pardoned, removed out of God's sight, and blotted out; for when the guilt is once taken away, the punishment shall either be averted wholly, or sanctified and made tolerable unto us; wherefore let us also say,

*Paraphrase.*

O most righteous Judge of all the world, which canst not but hate all the wickedness which thou beholdest; HIDE, I pray thee, THY FACE FROM a strict and narrow observance of MY SINS in this life, lest they provoke thee to punish me here; AND because all thy debtors must be called to account at the great judgment, do thou, for Jesus Christ's sake, BLOT OUT OF thy book of remembrance, the debts I have run into by ALL MY INIQUITIES, that I may not be condemned to an eternal prison for them hereafter.

<sup>b</sup> Prov. xxviii. 17. Avertenti oculos a paupere. Syriaca versio.

<sup>i</sup> Dan. vii. 10; Job xiv. 17. Signatum est in libro memoriarum rebellio mea. Targum in loc.



Psalm cxliii. 2. ENTER NOT INTO JUDGMENT WITH THY SERVANT, &c.] The same holy man, observing God had a controversy with him, takes our Saviour's advice, Matt. v. 25, to *agree with his adversary*; and resolving not to stand upon his own defence, he goes in, submits, and makes his peace, not staying till a judgment was dispatched to summon him, or witnesses produced to convince him, but rather choosing to supplicate his Judge, Job ix. 15, by making application to his infinite mercy; for there is no need of prosecuting, where the party doth let fall his cause and plead guilty. David thought this the safest course, and we may well do so too, 1 Pet. iv. 18. The best in the world, if examined strictly, will be found faulty in many particulars; so that there is no ground for us to contend, who are the vilest and worst of all. Therefore, if we fear God will chastise us, we must not pretend we are innocent, and thereupon presume we shall be spared, but rather confess our evil deservings without a judgment to force us, and let our hope of sparing be founded on his mercy, not our purity. We are sinners, but we may be spared for all that; for if all sinners must suffer, the whole world must be condemned, Rom. iii. 19. It is sure God spares many, and though many that are spared are better than we, yet none are altogether innocent, none but must be judged with favour and mercy, and if he please to judge us so, we may escape also; however, it is the best way, if we fear God's anger, to pray the suit may be stopped, saying in this manner:

*Paraphrase.*

Lord, thou chargest me with many sins, and it is likely intendest to punish me for them; I come not to assert myself clear, but before thou summonest, (knowing my guilt,) I pray thee ENTER NOT INTO JUDGMENT, neither reckon strictly in justice WITH THY SERVANT, who confess I have deserved punishment, but hope thou wilt spare me, who rely only on thy

mercy, and that is my best plea, FOR IN THY SIGHT, who seest so exactly, and hatest sin so perfectly, by defending his innocence SHALL NO MAN, no not the holiest person LIVING in this sinful world, be acquitted, nor can any BE JUSTIFIED before thee, without a favourable allowance, which I beseech thee also shew to me.

Jerem. x. 24. CORRECT ME, O LORD, BUT WITH JUDGMENT, &c.] We are to consider, that the very corrections of God are mixed with so much mercy, allayed by such a supply of inward comforts, and made so tolerable by his gracious purposes in sending them, that we ought not altogether to decline them; for if we feel no smart for our sin, we may more easily run into it again, Psalm cxix. 67, Ezra ix. 13, 14, and consequently go on in it till we pull upon ourselves eternal misery: and the poor humbled soul, who sees the punishment of sin to be the being forsaken of God, deprived of grace and glory, delivered up to be a slave to the basest lusts here, and a companion of the vilest persons and horriddest devils hereafter; this man will account a temporal chastisement (which delivers him from all those) a benefit and a favour, and with St. Augustine<sup>k</sup> will pray to be scorched and scarified, lanced and bound here, that he may be spared hereafter. From whence we ought to learn, instead of fearing and flying afflictions, to desire (as the prophet Jeremy here) to have some gentle correction with God's smallest rod<sup>l</sup>, with which he strikes his own children; for he is so merciful, that we ought not to be afraid to fall into his gracious hands, only to pray (as the prophet doth) that he will deal gently with us; especially if we apprehend some affliction just ready to fall upon us, then we must not

<sup>k</sup> Domine, hic ure, seca, liga, אֵשׁ Virga hominum infirmorum. ut parcas in æternum.

<sup>l</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 14; Hebr. בַּשֵּׁבֶט

absolutely desire God to lay by his rod, but to use it with judgment<sup>m</sup>, that is, gently and in measure, with consideration to our weakness; or in a sober and judicial way; in judgment<sup>n</sup>, not as a furious angry person falls on a man, who values not how nor where he strikes, nor cares if he take away our life. Let us pray therefore, that it may please God in his discipline to proceed as a sober and compassionate Judge, to punish us so that we may be amended and survive the strokes, yea, and be warned by the pain against future rebellions, not so as that we should faint under his hand, and fall into a condition worse than annihilation.

*Paraphrase.*

My God, since thy justice obligeth thee to punish sinners, and I have deserved so justly to suffer, and am so apt to go on in sin till I smart for it; I do beseech thee, CORRECT ME here with temporal afflictions, O LORD, that thou mayest spare me hereafter; but let not this correction be proportionable to my deserts, nor to thy displeasure, but let it be inflicted moderately WITH JUDGMENT, and consideration of my infirmities; punish me NOT IN THINE ANGER, as thou dost thy enemies, LEST THOU BRING ME TO NOTHING, so that I fall under thy hand, and survive not to be amended by it.

*A Meditation upon Psalm li. 9, and cxliii. 2, and Jer. x. 24, preparatory to Prayer in the fears of God's anger.*

O my soul, what fearful tremblings are these have seized on thee, so that the thoughts of God, that have been, and ought to be, thy greatest comfort, are now become thy terror and amazement? Whence is this miserable alteration, that thou canst behold nothing but judgment in the Father of mercies, and anger in the Fountain of love? What hath provoked him that delights to spare, to be resolved to punish? Surely my sins are very many, for it is not a few can incense him; and they have more than ordinary aggravations, for he is

<sup>m</sup> Cum judicio] modice: Junius. Heb. in modo.

<sup>n</sup> LXX. ἐκκρίσεις. V. et Vatab. in judicio.

not so highly displeased at small offences; and certainly I have often committed them, and long continued in them, for he begins not to frown upon the first misdemeanour. Alas, the case is too apparent! My sins are both very many and exceeding great, frequently repeated and of long continuance. I have despised mercy, and now I am likely to feel judgment. Miserable wretch that I am! I have tired out the patience of a long-suffering Father, and run from the embraces of a loving Saviour, rejected the offers of a most indulgent Holy Spirit; so that now I fear I have stopped up the fountain of his mercy, Isai. lix. 2, and unsealed the treasures of his vengeance, Deut. xxxii. 34. And I ought rather to wonder how God could spare me so long, than why he should strike me now, since many have been cut off for fewer and lesser sins: I see I have most justly deserved to suffer the worst of evils, and therefore shall esteem it an incomparable favour to be only corrected with a temporal affliction, if I might be so excused; but *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. x. 31. Therefore, O Lord, *my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments*, Psal. cxix. 120, yet I know no way to escape them. To deny my sins were impudence, to excuse them will be apparent hypocrisy. To be concealed is impossible, to be found intolerable; I am miserably confounded. But was never any in this case before, that I might receive some advice and comfort from them? Yes, surely, the church hath presented me with a king and a prophet, both dear to God, whose fears were greater though their sins were less, and their danger not so great as mine; yet these (in the midst of their fears) considered their sins as the only cause of these evils, and accordingly they freely confessed them, bitterly lamented, and exceedingly humbled themselves for them; not striving so much to avoid the punishment, as to obtain the pardon of their sins, knowing that the guilt once removed, thou wouldst either totally spare them, or gently chastise them for their good; wherefore they rendered themselves up into thy hands, rather aggravating than extenuating their offences, and yet humbly begging their correction might be in mercy, and they found the benefit of it. Go to then, my soul, and do thou likewise; thou hast first occasioned God's wrath

by the breaches of his laws, O do not increase it by distrusting his gospel: thou hast forsaken him by sin, run not further by despair; for the faster thou runnest from his mercy, the sooner thou wilt meet with his justice. Delay no longer, but go in before he send for thee; deliver up thyself before death or any judgment arrest thee, accuse thyself before thou be indicted, and confess thy sins freely before the witnesses be called out against thee; pass sentence on thyself ere the Judge condemn thee. I cannot expect wholly to escape, but it will be a great favour if I meet a sickness instead of death, losses in my estate instead of losing both my God and my soul for ever. I will not therefore desire my heavenly Father altogether to lay aside his rod, but only to use it gently, that I may by this smart be warned against those future sins that would bring me to utter ruin: O Lord, rather chastise me than disinherit me, and those stripes shall be welcome which come in exchange for eternal torments. For thou who dost change thy sword into a rod, I hope wilt be so compassionate in thy inflictions, that I shall only feel what my distempered soul needs to recover it, and my flesh and spirit can bear, not what my sins deserve, and thy justice might exact. Wherefore I will no longer hide my sins, but by an humble and hearty confession declare that I hate them more than I fear to fall into thy merciful hands; and I hope hereafter I shall so fear to offend, that I shall be freed from these sad expectations of thy heavy wrath, which wisdom God grant me for Jesus' sake. Amen.

*Of the Sentences proper for those who doubt of God's favour.*

§. IV. Not much unlike this is the case of poor doubting souls, who are discouraged from confession by misgiving thoughts, as if God were become utterly irreconcilable; and hence they conclude it needless to repent, because they believe the recovery of his favour to be impossible, and truly so it is, if we think it so to be; because, while they look upon it to be impossible, they shall never seek after it<sup>o</sup>; but it is the design of Satan to make them to think so, that they might never obtain

<sup>o</sup> Postquam enim adempta spes est, lassus cura confectus stupet. Arnob.

it, nor attempt it. Wherefore, to rescue these poor souls from so dangerous a delusion, and to prepare them to ask a pardon in faith, the church hath selected three portions of scripture more: the first, to shew they are fitly disposed to ask by their contrition<sup>p</sup>; the second, to demonstrate God is inclined to give, notwithstanding their unworthiness<sup>q</sup>; the third, to prove by a pertinent example they are likely to be received, if they will venture to come<sup>r</sup>.

6 Psalm li. 17. THE SACRIFICES OF GOD ARE A BROKEN SPIRIT, &c.] Let this dejected soul view holy David, after the commission of his great sin; who being earnestly desirous to be taken again into favour by God, ver. 12, was surveying his flocks and all his substance, Micah vi. 6, 7, to find some acceptable present to offer, resolving that nothing was too great nor too precious to procure a thing so excellent. But while he looks abroad, he remembers he hath something at home, a trembling broken heart, which panted in his breast, and therefore is here expressed by a word<sup>s</sup> signifying waves dashed against a rock: this broken spirit and contrite heart was the most acceptable offering in the world. God's justice in condemning, and his severity in executing the sentence of his wrath upon his enemies, was a mighty rock, against which his thoughts had beat so long, that his heart was almost dashed to pieces with fear; and now God shews him that his sighs and groans are pleasanter to him than the melody or the chantings of the sons of Asaph; its pantings and breathings are perfumes sweeter than the cloud of incense; its free confessions and exposing itself to shame, make it an acceptable heave-offering; its tears are a precious

<sup>p</sup> Psalm li. 17.

<sup>q</sup> Dan. ix. 9.

<sup>r</sup> Luke xv. 18, 19.

<sup>s</sup> Heb. נִכְרַח Fluctus ad scopulum allisus. Ita signif. Psal. xciv. 5.



drink-offering, and its flaming desires do make it more excellent than whole burnt-offerings, and all the sacrifices of the temple. The sorrows of our hearts are far more prevalent than the fattest oxen of our stalls, or the fairest calves of our lips, neither of which without contrition are respected by God, Matt. xv. 9. The prayers and tears of sorrowful Hannah can fetch a greater and speedier blessing from heaven than the costly oblations of Elkanah, 1 Sam. i. 13. David is resolved to offer this, for this he is sure God will not despise it; which word *not despise*, is to meet with the fears of a contrite sinner, who, because he knows his own heart to be so filthy, deceitful, and vile a thing, cannot believe but God will reject it, as he did the lame and the blind, the sick and maimed sacrifice under the law. But he assures you that God will *not despise* it; but there is more intended<sup>t</sup>, even that he will accept it kindly: as when Christ saith, *He will not cast them off who come to him*; he means, he will lovingly entertain them; so here it is certain, God will not only not despise it, but he will look upon it as the best and greatest gift, though it be from the hand of a publican, Luke xviii. 14: wherefore be not disheartened, for your fears shew you have this broken heart, offer that, and be assured God will embrace it lovingly, treat it tenderly, and keep it safely: say then,

*Paraphrase.*

I have nothing in this world so dear to me, but I would give it freely to purchase God's favour; but though men be thus appeased, yet he must have something he likes better, and truly THE SACRIFICES most likely to be accepted of God, who needs no outward things, ARE A BROKEN SPIRIT, which trembles at his anger, and hateth itself for its sins, and is almost dashed to pieces betwixt fear and sorrow. And I hope thy grace hath

<sup>t</sup> Minus dicitur et sub eo magis intelligitur: ut Johan. vi. 37. et alibi.

given me such A BROKEN AND A CONTRITE HEART, which I humbly offer; and though to me it seems so vile, yet, O GOD, THOU, whose favour alone I do desire, WILT NOT DESPISE nor reject it, but graciously accept and embrace both me and my oblation.

Dan. ix. 9. TO THE LORD OUR GOD BELONG MERCIES AND FORGIVENESSES, &c.] If they shall further argue against themselves, that they deny not God's gracious nature, but that they fear their iniquities have turned his love into hatred, his mercy into fury, and his kindness into indignation; behold in the next place a free discovery of what God is to miserable sinners. The Jews, who were then in captivity, had so grievously offended, that Daniel, who much desired their restauration, scarce knew how to plead for them, till at last he finds an argument in God's gracious nature; viz. that *mercies and forgivenesses* (that is, many, nay infinite mercies and forgivenesses for numberless sins) were God's peculiar possession, a principal part of his name, Exod. xxxiv. 6, the chiefest of his attributes, and inseparably annexed to his essence, and therefore the sins of his creatures cannot make any change in God. Mercy in the creatures is by communication from him, but he is the original and fountain which is never dry. To him Daniel confesseth they are sinners, but will not grant 7 that therefore they ought not to hope for pardon, since their evil doings could not rifle his treasures, nor rob him of his attributes, nor alter his nature, which continues the same still; and therefore there is mercy to be had. He confesses them guilty of all sorts of sins; that is, sins of commission, and that even to an absolute rebelling against God, and forsaking of him by idolatry<sup>a</sup>; and then also of omission, by neglect of

<sup>a</sup> LXX. ἀπιστημεν, ita Vulg. et Vatab.

walking in God's law, although they were taught and instructed in it; so that they deserved no mercy: but God is the fountain of mercies still, and therefore there is yet hope. Other translations generally read not *though*, but *because we have sinned*, which is but a further illustration of the same sense, viz. we may see and be convinced that mercy is God's peculiar possession, because we have done such vile things; and yet he hath spared us on purpose that we might by our humiliation give him occasion to forgive us; and this his pity in sparing shews his intention of restoring us, and therefore should quicken us to address to him who hath it solely in his own power.

*Paraphrase.*

Why should we, because we have formerly sinned, remain without hope of ever being received, since we know that TO THE LORD Jehovah, who is peculiarly OUR GOD, as inseparably annexed to his essence, and as his own proper possession, BELONG MERCIES infinite, AND FORGIVENESSES more than our sins can need; and since they are in him, we hope we shall have them, though we are unworthy; for THOUGH WE HAVE sinned by breaking his laws, and REBELLED AGAINST HIM by forsaking his covenant, NEITHER HAVE WE done what he commanded us, nor OBEYED THE VOICE OF THE LORD OUR GOD, who charged us by his servants TO WALK IN HIS LAWS, and tread in that plain and pleasant path WHICH HE SET BEFORE US; though all this be true, we do repent of it, but will not despair, because God can yet restore us.

Luke xv. 18, 19. I WILL ARISE AND GO TO MY FATHER, &c.] To enforce both the former, and encourage these humbled souls whose desires are too big for their faith, here is a lively example of one, Luke xv. 18, 19, whose condition was as miserable, his faults as great, and his reception as unlikely as yours can be, and yet he comes and speeds, that you may take encouragement from him,

and do likewise. The instance is that of the prodigal son, who had voluntarily forsaken his father's house, and carried away his full portion, which he wasted and consumed in all manner of riot and excess, never thinking of nor regarding his father all the time of his madness, till extreme want had restored him to the use of his reason<sup>x</sup>, and put him into his wits again; and then he blames himself for lying still in his sin, (which is *lapsus animæ*, the fall of the soul,) or in his sorrow, (which is expressed by sitting on the ground, Isai. iii. 26,) in which posture he sees he may remain disconsolate for ever, and be no nearer to his father's house; wherefore he resolves to take courage and arise, and shaking off his ineffective grief, to repent and return home. His father had not called him, nor had he any assurance he should be received; only he knew if he sat still he must starve, and if he were repulsed he could suffer no more. He comes not to make any apology, but to bring an accusation against himself; he hoped indeed that his offence could not untie the bands of that dear relation, and therefore calls him *father*, but confesseth he had forfeited the title of *son*, and not only broken the law of nature, but of heaven, that is, of the God of heaven<sup>y</sup>, who expressly requireth this obedience. He could have wished a return to his father's table, but that were presumption to expect, only he hopes he will not see him starve, and if he be set with the meanest servants, they have bread enough. But the father is readier to hear than the son to desire, and what his unworthiness made him ashamed to ask, his father's bounty made him willing to bestow; and he that scarce hoped

<sup>x</sup> Ver. 17. *Εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἔλθων*, ad seipsum rediens. Omnes insipientes igitur insaniunt. Tusc. Quæst. l. 3.

<sup>y</sup> *Cœlum pro Deo ponitur*, quoniam est ejus habitaculum. Elias Tisb. Psal. lxxiii. 9.

to be admitted a servant, is once more owned as a dear son : this he found, and so shall they that follow his example.

*Paraphrase.*

Why do I sit still in my sin, vainly bemoaning my folly, while I am like to starve; surely I WILL take courage and ARISE by repentance, AND go by faith with prayer and supplication TO MY FATHER, who can relieve me, and perhaps may have pity on me. And to move his bowels toward me, as soon as I see him, I will fall down, AND WILL SAY UNTO HIM, FATHER, thou didst beget me that am now so wretched, I here 8 confess that I HAVE SINNED, by my ungodly courses, AGAINST HEAVEN AND BEFORE THEE the God that dwellest there, being so ungrateful for all thy love, that I justly deserve to be disowned and left in my misery, for I have forfeited my relation, AND AM NO MORE WORTHY TO BE CALLED THY SON, yet I hope thou wilt not let me perish, who feedest thy meanest servants.

*A Meditation upon Psalm li. 17, Dan. ix. 9, and Luke xv. 18, 19, preparatory to Prayer, when we doubt of the favour of God to us.*

He that hath a considerable request to make to an earthly king, must not approach without a present in his hand; but my request is to the King of kings, to whose laws I have been disobedient, false to his government, refractory to his summons, and ingrateful for his former favours: and what can I offer to him that needs nothing? What can I give to him, whose both myself and all I have are? His favour indeed is so sweet, so desirable, and so universal a comprehension of all happiness, that I could freely give all I have or may procure, for the purchase of it; but the whole world is vanity to him, neither can such trifles blind his eyes or bind his hands; buy his mercy to the unworthy, or avert his justice from the sinner. I could, methinks, expose my body to the sharpest torments, my soul to the heaviest sorrows, and my life to the cruellest tyrant, and would account it a happy purchase, if I were sure of his everlasting mercy afterwards; but it cost more to redeem a soul, I can give nothing but it is his already, and I can suffer nothing

but what I have deserved. What then? O where shall I have a peace-offering which may not be despised! I am told nothing is more acceptable than a broken heart: 'tis strange! Can an heart polluted with the guilt, and enslaved to the power of sin, slow to begin, and unable to perform any good; but vigorous to desire, and unwearied to pursue all evil—can a heart shaken with fears, torn in pieces with sorrow, and even a terror to itself, miserable and poor, blind and naked—can this heart be a fit sacrifice for so glorious and all-seeing, so holy and pure a God? can he like that which I abhor? Alas! it cannot be! But let me recall that hasty word, for he hath said it, who best knows what will please himself; and if he value it, it is worthy, for the true worth of any thing is to be judged by his estimation of it. Who knows but such a broken heart may be a greater evidence of his power and mercy, a fitter instrument of his praise and glory, a plainer table to describe his grace, and draw his image on, than any other? Such a heart I have; and if this serve, I am happy, I will give it freely to thee, O Lord, who despisest not the meanest gift, if there be sincerity in the giver. It was broken before with fear, but it will now be dissolved with love; I am ashamed it is no better, but thy mercy is the greater in accepting it, and it will become better by being thine. O how am I filled with admiration at the freeness and fulness of thy mercies, in comparison of which the greatest human compassion seems cruelty! I dare proclaim to all, that in thee are all the mercies of the world united, and thou art mercy itself in the highest degree. If my disobedience and negligence, contempt and ingratitude, could have separated thee from thy mercy, I had now met thee in fury, taking vengeance without pity; for I have seemed to live as if I had designed to dare thee to turn away thyself from me, and to try thy utmost patience, the least part of which baseness would have turned my best friends in the world against me; but behold the mercy of my God continues still! O let me have the shame of an ingrateful sinner, and let thy name have the glory of an inexpressible pity, even to those who are almost ashamed to ask pardon; yea, let me to whom thou hast shewed such compassion, have the honour to be an instance of thy goodness to all the world. And have I such a Father? Why then do I lie still with this load of guilt upon my soul, and this heavy burden

of sorrow upon my spirit? What do I get by these vain complaints, but waste my time and double my misery by sad reflections? I can neither have help from myself nor any creature, but from my Father alone, to whom mercies are as proper as misery is to me; and if I through fear or sorrow sit still here and starve, I shew not so much pity to myself as he would have for me, if he saw my great distress. Wherefore I will arise and go to him, though I think I shall scarce have the face to ask more, since I spent the last so ill; I shall be ashamed to tell him how base I have been; but as I was not ashamed when I did evil, so I must have shame when I suffer<sup>9</sup> the desert of it: I will go bathed in tears, blushing for shame, accusing myself, and (relying on the bowels of a Father) will beg only so much mercy as will banish despair, and give me some little hope; and if I may have this I will be content, though I be not entertained with assurance and certain expectations, for the least favourable look is more than I have deserved. Yet behold upon the first sight of the returning prodigal, who came unsent for, driven home by his own miseries, his tender father runs to meet him, takes the words out of his mouth, and receives him with all the demonstrations of love and the caresses of a dear affection. And is my God less merciful? He who hath invited me so often, and promised me so largely? I have done ill to stay so long, but I will go now high in my desires, low in my expectations, sorrowing for my offence, and begging his mercy; and I hope, though I carry no merits of my own to his justice, yet I carry misery enough to make his bowels of compassion yearn upon me, and then I cannot perish. Amen.

Thus we see the church hath shewed her care of these contrite ones in selecting the most and choicest of these sentences for them, who are the best, though the least part of the people; and though such are *vile in their own eyes*<sup>2</sup>, yet they are dear to God, highly valued by all good people, and tenderly indulged by the church, who wishes there were more of this blessed temper.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xv. 4. Old Translat. Chald. Par. Viles præ oculis suis.



*Of the Sentences proper for the Ignorant.*

§. V. The next sort of men who come to pray, are involved in gross ignorance, and such are inapprehensive of their guilt and unacquainted with their danger, who know neither what to ask, nor of whom, nor why; so that these had need be instructed before they begin to pray, or otherwise though they come out of custom, yet they will offer nothing but the sacrifice of fools; in regard they either think they have no sin, or else suppose a very slight repentance will obtain their pardon; but here is a remedy for both these mistakes.

1 John i. 8, 9. IF WE SAY THAT WE HAVE NO SIN, &c.] Those who do not see their sins do need that spiritual eye-salve, Rev. iii. 18. Because they cannot be cured till they know themselves to be sick<sup>a</sup>, if they do not discern that they are sinners, they will account it a reproach to be reputed such, and return the summons of God, the exhortation of his ministers, and the charity of their reprovers with scorn or anger. There were of old some heretics, so impudent as to say positively they had no sin<sup>b</sup>: so did the followers of Valentinus, Marcus, and Basilides, and others who denied that any wickedness was a sin in them; and some in our days have come too near them. But many who hate such gross opinions, and will not say so with their mouths, yet through ignorance or pride say so in their heart<sup>c</sup>, which is a language that God understands, and therefore in scripture to think and to say are sometimes the

<sup>a</sup> Quibusdam ægris gratulatio fit cum seipsos ægros esse senserunt. Sen. Ep. 6.

<sup>b</sup> Epiphanius in Hæres. Valent. lib. i. tom. 2. et Marcos. lib. i. tom. 3. Ὅς ἦτοι ἐχόντων ἐξουσίαν, καὶ τὸ ἁμαρτεῖν — διὰ τὴν

ἐμφυτον ἐκλογὴν. Clem. Alex. Strom. 3.

<sup>c</sup> Ἡ γραφὴ τὴν διώθεσιν πολλάκις ἀπὸ ῥημάτων δεικνύει. Psalm xxx. 6; Isa. xlvii. 10. Adrian. Isagoge.

same: but the apostle declares that if we Christians, even the best of us, should either say or think so, it is a great error, and both false in itself, and dangerous to him that believes it<sup>d</sup>. The scripture frequently and plainly tells us we are sinners; and if we think we are not, it is because we desire to be deceived, and would gladly seem innocent to ourselves; which is so far from making us really so, that hereby we remain guilty for ever<sup>e</sup>, because we never seek a pardon. In the courts of man, confession is a cause of condemnation, but if we think it so at God's tribunal, *we deceive ourselves*; for before him, not he that confesses, but he that denies, is condemned. For if we confess our faults, we are here assured that two of God's attributes will be on our side. First, his truth will then oblige him to forgive us, because he hath promised it, Prov. xxviii. 13. And 10 if any relying on that promise do come in and accuse himself, God's truth will engage him to pardon him, and perform that, now it is promised, which none could have expected, if there had not been a promise for it. Secondly, his justice or righteousness will also plead for us; because justice being satisfied by Christ's death, desires no further vengeance on the penitent sinner, but grants a pardon as the just desert of Christ's merits; or in the Hebrew notion of justice and righteousness who put it for charity and mercy<sup>f</sup>, *he is just* may signify the goodness and kindness of God, which is the foundation of our hopes, when we do confess, and through his mercy we may not only obtain forgiveness

<sup>d</sup> Eccles. vii. 20. Μηδ' ὁποσοῦν ἁμαρτάνειν οὐδ' ἀνθρώπινον. Procopius. Quisquis se inculpatum dixerit, aut superbus est aut stultus. Cyprian. de Opere et Eleemosyna. Rom. iii. 20.

<sup>e</sup> Sine peccato autem qui se

vivere existimat, non id agit ut peccatum non habeat, sed ut veniam non accipiat. Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. 14. cap. 19.

<sup>f</sup> Dan. iv. 24; Prov. x. 2; Matth. vi. 1. Vide Grot. et Hammond. in loc.

of the guilt, but may be cleansed from the filth of our sins also. From all which it appears that he is a fool, who out of laziness, shame, or fear, doth dissemble or deny his sins, for he is not only deceived, but undone for ever by it, when as by an humble and hearty acknowledgment of them, God's truth and mercy would have been his advocates, and have procured pardon and peace for him.

*Paraphrase.*

The scripture declares, and our own conscience beareth witness, that we all have sinned ; so that IF WE SAY, out of pride or ignorance, or do but think in our hearts, THAT WE HAVE NO SIN to confess or repent of, supposing to be excused the sooner before God, because we do not or will not condemn our own ways, WE DECEIVE, not God, (who sees all things,) but OURSELVES ; for we lose our pardon by standing on our innocence, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US, because we speak falsely to the Almighty's face.

They therefore that conceal their wickedness, God will discover it and condemn them for it ; BUT IF WE, having observed ourselves guilty, deal ingenuously, and CONFESS OUR SINS with hatred, shame, and sorrow, he hath promised to give us a pardon, and we may trust his word, for HE IS FAITHFUL ; and since Christ hath suffered the vengeance due to such, God is righteous AND JUST, so that he will not exact the forfeiture of us, but be ready TO FORGIVE US the punishment due to OUR SINS, AND TO CLEANSE US FROM the stains of ALL INIQUITIES which we had committed.

Ezek. xviii. 27. WHEN THE WICKED MAN TURNETH AWAY FROM HIS &c.] If the ignorant man do discern any of his sins, yet he is apt to think there is no difficulty to obtain a pardon, if he but acknowledge them and cry God mercy for them. Before such, the church lays this place, wherein they may see that their souls shall not be delivered from death when they confess, but when they turn from their sins ; and till then they

have not repented. For to repent implies a disapproving of what we have done, so as to do it no more, a change of the mind and actions also<sup>g</sup>; when we no longer continue to do that which we grieve that we ever did: and this is here plainly shewed to be the condition on which our sins may be forgiven; viz. if first, we *cease to do evil*<sup>h</sup>; secondly, *learn to do well*; and surely he that confesseth himself to be in a wrong way, and grieves for it, will both leave the path he is in, and labour to find out the right: so must the wicked man, or otherwise he doth in vain expect a pardon from God, who will not forgive one fault to him that intends to commit more, lest his mercy become the support of iniquity, and his goodness the encouragement to the breach of his laws. And if it seem difficult, that you must forsake all evil, and do the contrary good before you can be accepted, you must consider, the benefit of it is the *saving your souls alive*: this will preserve you from a twofold death, (the least of which is worse than bodily death,) a dying in sin, and a dying for sin. First, while you go on to practise these sins, you are really dead<sup>i</sup>, though you have a name to live, because, so long, you have no sense of any good, nor motion toward it, nor any union with God, whose departure from the soul of the sinner is as real a death to the soul, as it is to the body to have the soul separated from it. Secondly, by 11 forsaking your sins, God will be moved to pardon you,

<sup>g</sup> *Μεράνεια* est ut qui errorem suum pristinum intelligit—ab insania se reciperet,—et id maxime caveret, ne in eisdem laqueos iterum inducatur. Lact. inst. lib. 6. Munst. Heb. תשובה Matt. iii. 2. h. e. Facite vitæ conversionem.

<sup>h</sup> Isa. i. 16, 17.

<sup>i</sup> Impii etiamsi videantur vi-

vere, miseriores tamen sunt omnibus mortuis, carnem suam sicut tumulum circumferentes, cui infœlicem infoderunt animam, —quæ intra humum volvitur et terrenæ avaritiæ cupiditatibus cæterisque vitiis includitur, ut gratiæ cœlestis auram spirare non possunt. Ambros. de Cain et Ab. Ephes. ii. 1; 1 Tim. v. 6.

that so you may not die eternally; whereas the wicked man that lives in his sins, first God forsakes his soul, and then his soul forsakes his body, and so begins his eternal misery<sup>k</sup>, where his soul lives only to feel torments, but never more to enjoy any good.

Turn ye then out of that evil way that leads to both these deaths, and your souls shall live in glory.

*Paraphrase.*

Though I might easily and justly revenge myself on the sinner for all his old transgressions, yet through my Son Christ Jesus I do here promise, WHEN THE WICKED MAN, who is walking in the ways of death, not only confesseth his fault, but also TURNETH AWAY from those paths, and being really grieved for what is past, abstaineth FROM HIS WICKEDNESS, and never more practiseth those sins THAT HE HATH formerly with so much delight COMMITTED; if this wicked man, I say, amend his life, AND DOTH THAT WHICH IS LAWFUL and allowed by my word, so that his ways be good AND RIGHT in my eyes, I will forgive and set him free; so that though impenitent sinners are dead in sin here, and die eternally for it hereafter, HE SHALL SAVE HIS SOUL ALIVE, and attain everlasting glory.

*A Meditation upon 1 John i. 8, 9, and Ezek. xviii. 27, preparatory to Prayer, for the instruction of the ignorant and mistaken.*

Is it possible I should all this while be deluded so grossly as to imagine my eyes open, my way direct and full of light, when indeed my eyes are shut, my feet are wrong, and my mind is overspread with the Egyptian darkness of a stupid ignorance? Thy word, O Lord, is a light to my feet, not only to shew me which is the right way, but to let me know when I am in the wrong. But I have given up myself to false guides, who, lest I should inquire after the right way, would never acquaint me I was wandering from it; had I followed them still, I had stumbled on the threshold of hell, while I expected to arrive at the gates of heaven. O blessed be thy name, I now see I have been straying from thee the fountain of all

<sup>k</sup> Cum anima a Deo deserta deserit corpus. Aug.

true happiness, and have been in vain seeking content where it is not to be found, till the disappointment now drives me to seek it where it is : had I not been a stranger to my own heart, I had not been so far out of the right way. But I have supposed myself clear, only because I never considered wherein I was guilty, and have flattered myself with the pleasing thoughts of my own innocence, so that I have been as secure as if I really had been guiltless. I have been glad to spare myself the labour of a further inquiry, most foolishly accounting that to be a peace which was no other but want of a sense of my real danger. I find my chief design hath been to seem good, and to persuade myself I was so, that I might be more quiet in the ways of evil, and might neither be accused by my own conscience, nor alarmed by the dreadful threatenings which I supposed did not belong to me. But, alas ! how miserable would the end of this self-deceit have been ! for thou, O my God, didst see, and wouldst have condemned me for all my blasphemous and repining thoughts against thee, my malicious and envious thoughts against my neighbour ; thou heardest all those false and slanderous, vain and filthy words I uttered with my mouth ; those deceitful and unjust, cruel and uncharitable works, which I committed with my hands thou sawest ; yea, all that formality and hypocrisy, ambition and pride, lust and covetousness, that lay in the secret corners of my heart, was apparent in thy sight ; and what did it avail me not to see them ? Thy vengeance would have come as certainly and more terribly, because it was not expected. It is most strange I should never see this vast heap before ; but sure I have wilfully shut my eyes, lest I should discern that which I was loath to believe, and unwilling to amend. But now I see mine iniquities by thy mercy, and I believe I have offended thee as much by my hypocrisy in concealing them, as by my disobedience in committing them. Therefore now I will ingenuously confess them, because the graciousness of thy nature, the truth of thy promises, and the satisfaction of the Lord Jesus, are sufficient to procure a pardon for me, who (dare so far trust to thy mercy, as to) become my own accuser. Yet, my God, since thou hast so graciously convinced me of the evil and danger of those courses I have taken, I will not rest in a bare confession that 12

I am in the wrong, but by thy grace will turn into the right way, and utterly forsake all these my follies. Thy mercy indeed is great enough to forgive me upon my humble acknowledgment, but to live in my sins is as inconsistent with my happiness as with thy holy laws. And therefore, O my soul, he that desires thy felicity will not forgive the old score, unless thou cease to run further in debt. Dost thou not see, while thou goest on in sin, thou art in the way to eternal death, and besides art dead to all sense of Divine comfort, and buried alive in lusts and pleasures? Thy flesh entombs thy wretched soul, and the grave-clothes of vile affections bind thee hand and foot from moving towards God, or breathing the pure air of heavenly meditations; and canst thou like to stay in this filthy place still? When thou didst not see thy misery, no wonder if thou calledst this dungeon and vault a palace; but now thou must abhor it when Jesus calls, *Lazarus, come forth!* Dost thou not find, the more thou followest these, the less thou lovest thy God, and hast seldomer converse with him, slower motions towards him, meaner thoughts of him? Return then from these evil paths, for now thou knowest the dead are there. Do not only seek a pardon from him, but desire a communion with him, who is thy strength and life, thy joy and happiness; and he will be so glad of thy recovery, that forgetting all thy former unworthiness, he will only study how to make thee happy hereafter. There is nothing that can hinder thee, unless thou lovest thy sins too well to forsake them, and carest so little for God, that thou hadst rather die without him, than with him live holily here and happily hereafter.

*Of the Sentences proper for the Negligent.*

§. VI. Another sort of men there are, who know it to be their duty to repent, and yet do from day to day neglect it, and have more need to be excited than instructed; in order whereunto here is provision made, 1. of a cogent example, 2. of a strict command to put them upon the practice of this necessary grace.

Psalm li. 3. I ACKNOWLEDGE MY TRANSGRESSION, AND MY SIN &c.] Such who are great, yet careless sinners,

may well blush to behold one who had been no customary offender, but being once surprised in a deplorable instance, never gives over thinking upon it with shame and sorrow, whereas we that are more guilty never concern ourselves. The rest of David's life was a strict observance of God's will; and if the Jewish conceit of good deeds being weighed over against the evil might be allowed; or if, after the manner of the Persians<sup>1</sup>, his former life had been considered with his present transgression, surely he might have been excused; but he never attempts to hide this one sin in a crowd of holy actions, nor goes about to extenuate it, because it was the first, or but one, or not great in comparison of others, but confesseth it to be very heinous, continually laying it open, not only before God, but before himself, that he might recollect with grief and sorrow the guilt and filth of it, the baseness of the act, and the danger of the event, and fully discover the vileness and horridness thereof. It seems he was not without dreadful apprehension of God's anger; for we fix our eye on what we fear, and cannot get that out of our minds which doth affright us, but it is continually before us. O how doth this reproach our negligence who are guilty of many and great wickednesses, and have no holy actions to set over against them! and yet we either cast them behind our backs, and forget our danger; or if we do sometimes look over them, we do it slightly, and are glad of any occasion to divert us. It is certain God sees them, and will one day set them in array, and muster them up against us<sup>m</sup>, unless by looking on them now,

<sup>1</sup> Vita anterior simul cum delicto in æstimationem venit, et qua major pars vitæ atque ingenii stetit, ea judicandum de

homine. Asin. Pollio de Persis.

<sup>m</sup> Psalm l. 21. תַּעֲרֹכָה tanquam acies armatorum disponam.



we learn to abhor and repent of them; for then God of his mercy will for ever hide his eyes from them.

*Paraphrase.*

Though others be unconcerned when they offend, I must and will publish my baseness in offending thee my heavenly Father. Lord, I ACKNOWLEDGE with a sad heart MY TRANSGRESSION of thy most holy law, by this and other wilful acts of wickedness, by which I know I have so justly deserved thy wrath, that my eye and mind are fixed on what I have done, AND MY SIN haunts me continually, gives my conscience no rest, because it IS EVER BEFORE ME, and I cannot forget it or cease to fear, till thou hast pardoned it.

Matt. iii. 2. REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN &c.] If the shame of such an example make no impression, hear that strict and positive summons from God to all the world to repent, which was proclaimed first by the harbinger St. John in the wilderness, to those who came to him thither, and after it was published by the Lord Jesus himself in towns and cities, to all those that he met with there; this was his first sermon<sup>n</sup>, and is our first lesson in Christ's school; to be learned not by some persons only, but by all that will be his disciples. He speaks to all, and to every particular man, *Repent ye*; for he knows this duty necessary for every one: if any say he will not, he despiseth his authority; if he plead he need not, he impeacheth his wisdom; and if he allege he cannot yet, it seems he dare live in a wilful neglect of his commands. Tertulian thinks we ought not to inquire what need or what good there is of repentance<sup>o</sup>, because the commands of God (by whose favour we hope for eternal happiness)

<sup>n</sup> Matt. iv. 17. Μετάνοια τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀρχή. Hierocles.

<sup>o</sup> Neque enim quia bonum est auscultare debemus, sed quia

Deus præceperit, et ad exhibitionem obsequii prior est auctoritas imperantis, quam utilitas servientis. Lib. de Poenit.

are to have weight with us without any appendant reason; but here we have a reason of the precept added, to shew us he enjoins not this so much to shew his authority, as because it is necessary for us, and because our interest requires it; viz. because *the kingdom of heaven*, or *of God*, (which is all one, *ant.* p. 18,) *is at hand*; that is, either the kingdom of grace, as it is sometimes taken in scripture, Matt. xiii. 24; and when this was spoken by our Saviour he meant it in this sense; viz. that the time being now approaching wherein the Messias and Saviour of the world was to set up a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men, it was necessary for all that desired to become his subjects, to renounce those lusts to which they had been enslaved, and to prepare his way by repentance, or else they must remain slaves to death and hell still. And this reason urgeth us now as strongly as ever, because our Lord Jesus doth every day now by his word and ambassadors proclaim liberty to us, and offers to become our king; but in most of our hearts sin hath usurped his throne, which we must first exclude by repentance, or else we shew that we love the slavery of Satan better than the liberty of the sons of God, and will not have Christ to reign over us. It is true, he may for a while connive at this affront; yet secondly, remember there is another kingdom of heaven at hand; even the kingdom of glory, which is sometimes called *the kingdom of heaven*, 1 Cor. vi. 9, and 2 Thess. i. 5, wherein all that have rejected Christ for their King shall be utterly destroyed, Luke xix. 27, and condemned to unspeakable and endless torments. Let this fill such lazy persons with fear, because for any thing they know the end of all is near; however, it is secret, and will be so sudden when it doth come, that if it surprise us, we can never repent again; and if the world should last ten thousand years more, it is nothing to us,

for this kingdom of heaven begins with us when we leave this world by death; and therefore who knows how near the kingdom of heaven may be unto us?

*Paraphrase.*

You who have committed many sins, and do still go on in them, and so are neither capable of that grace which is offered you here, nor fit to appear in that judgment which must pass upon you hereafter; I charge you all, **REPENT YE** of all your wickednesses, confess them seriously, and forsake them speedily, **FOR THE KINGDOM** of Jesus Christ the eternal Son of the God **OF HEAVEN** is now to be set up in the hearts of all true penitents, and they who refuse this grace their death is not far off, and the kingdom of glory is **AT HAND**, and will surprise them in their trifling intentions to their utter ruin.

*14 A Meditation upon Psalm li. 3, and Matt. iii. 3, preparatory to Prayer for the quickening of such as neglect Repentance.*

It had been well for my soul, if all this while my safety had been equal to my confidence, for none ever thought themselves more secure, though there was no other ground for it, but only because I was resolved not to take the pains to behold my danger. I have multiplied my transgressions, and lived in sins unamended, yea, unrepented of, and therefore have had the drawn sword of the Divine vengeance hanging over my guilty head by the slender thread of my uncertain life, which every thing can snap asunder. Yet I have wilfully shut my eyes, choosing rather to feel the eternal smart of it, than to behold this dreadful sight, which would long since have terrified me into amendment, and snatched me from under the approaching ruin. What prodigious folly hath seized on me! What stupid laziness hath benumbed me! Are the pains of escaping greater than the pain of suffering? Or will the blow be lighter, because I resolve neither to see it nor avoid it? Awake, my soul, awake, while there is a possibility to prevent thy ruin. Thy sins are so numerous and so heinous, that thou canst not be ignorant of them; the threatenings of God's wrath are so plain and positive, that thou mayest see they aim at thee; thy conscience cries so loud, that thou canst not but hear it; and God's Holy Spirit pleads so powerfully, that thou must take as much pains to exclude these friends, as would serve to turn out

thy enemies. Surely God gave me not wit and understanding to make a plausible cover for the eyes of my conscience, or to contrive bulwarks of excuses to entrench my sins in safety; and yet I, unhappy wretch, have been ingenious in nothing so much as in plotting the ruin of my soul, and designing to perish undisturbed. Behold and blush to see where holy David lies covered with shame, drowned in tears, and not able through fear and terror to take his eye off from that one offence, whilst thou, a far greater sinner, art careless and unconcerned. He sets his sins before his own face, and God hides his face from them; but I, who cast them behind me, and strive to bury them in oblivion, shall have them set before my face, when the sight of them will not conduce to the obtaining of my pardon, but the aggravating my eternal misery. The sight of them indeed is most unpleasant, the object odious and ungrateful; but the benefit will abundantly recompense the trouble; and if I behold them now, so as to repent of them, I shall see them no more for ever. I will imitate therefore this holy man, and ever view the guilt and danger of them, that I may humbly confess them, and obtain a pardon for them; my wretched heart hath taken pleasure in committing them, and it shall have vexation in reflecting on them; for I will not take my eyes off them till the horrid aspect of my grievous iniquities has humbled my soul for them, and turned my heart against them. O blessed Jesus, (that knowest the necessities of all,) thy universal command of repentance to all men, methinks, seems peculiarly directed to me, who have neglected this necessary duty hitherto. Thou, O Lord, seest my danger, and pitiest my approaching ruin; I bow my head and heart, and neither can nor dare disobey so gracious and loving advice, so useful and necessary a warning. Thy bare word had been sufficient to command obedience from me who expect salvation by thee, but thou art pleased further to convince me: I do believe, dear Jesus, the benefit is great, if I shall turn now while thy grace is so freely offered to all people: I know the danger is dreadful, if I defer any longer, since it is certain thy kingdom shall come, but uncertain how soon either death shall arrest me, or judgment surprise me in such delays; I have cause to bless thee, that neither of these have happened unto me, though I have excluded thee

out of my heart, and entertained my sins there; yet, Lord, thou callest still, and now I am making what haste I can, O remember not how long I have stayed, but consider how little time I have left, and by the help of thy grace make my work short and easy, proportionable to my time and strength. I confess I knew before, but I never considered till now, and now I dare not stay; but through thy help I come, O do not cast me off, for thy mercies' sake. Amen.

15

*Of the Sentence proper for the Formal.*

§. VII. Joel ii. 13. RENT YOUR HEARTS AND NOT YOUR GARMENTS, &c.] Lastly, if any by daily use of these offices begin to grow careless, and to rest in the outward ceremony and customary observance of this confession, we do here present them with the summons which God sent to his people, who in their distresses were ready enough at all the external rites of mourning, covering their head, or sprinkling it with ashes, wearing of sackcloth, or tearing their usual garments, sighing and sitting on the ground like Job's friends<sup>p</sup>, yet all this in God's sight was esteemed but hypocrisy, without that which these signs were to represent, viz. a contrite heart and a broken spirit, of which David speaks before. The renting of the mantle was an emblem of an heart torn with sorrow, and was one of the highest expressions of a mighty grief; and therefore renting the garment was ordered by the Jewish doctors never to be used but upon the death of a father, master, prince, or judge, or in a common calamity of fire or sword, or upon the commission of the most heinous crimes, blasphemy, burning the law, or the sanctuary<sup>q</sup>; and yet this is not sufficient; for if it be separated from a true repentance, it is but like the punishment of the Persian nobles,

<sup>p</sup> Job ii. 12. Externe omnia exprimi possunt. Codur. in loc. luctus signa quæ pessimis facile <sup>q</sup> Drusius in Job ii. 12.

whose cloaks of silk were torn, their ornaments ruffled, and hair disordered by the executioner, but their bodies untouched. It would be rather acceptable to God to omit the ceremony, and perform the thing signified; because that is the principal, this the accessary. *Rent therefore your hearts, and not*, i. e. rather than, *your garments*; be principally concerned about this<sup>r</sup>. Though God doth not wholly reject the ceremony neither, for this phrase, *not your garments*, may signify, not only your garments<sup>s</sup>, which is not rejected when it is accompanied with true repentance<sup>t</sup>: think not then to please God by a sorrow that goes no nearer to you than the borders of your garment; it must pierce the flesh, nay, the heart, before you will feel the evil of your ways so far as to amend them<sup>u</sup> and turn to God; which is the next part of our duty; and to encourage us to it, the prophet repeats all those attributes of mercy which God is described by, Exod. xxxiv. 6, leaving out all that was terrible, lest any should pretend discouragement from those terrors, and stay away. Methinks a greater sorrow than ceremony can express, becomes us who have offended a God who is *gracious*, that is, so apt and ready to do us good; *merciful*, viz. so full of compassion and pity when we are in misery; a God *slow to anger*, not easily provoked, *of great kindness*, even to those who have offended, being willing to be reconciled and inclinable to forgive, and one *that repents him of the evil* which we deserve, and which he once resolved to bring upon us<sup>x</sup>, not out of any change in

<sup>r</sup> Matth. xii. 7. ex Hos. vi. 6.  
LXX. Ἐλεος θέλω ἢ θυσίαν. Drusus, Potius quam sacrificium.

<sup>s</sup> Gen. xxxii. 28.

<sup>t</sup> Ezra ix. 3.

<sup>u</sup> Nemo enim se adsuefacit ad vitandum et ex animo evellendum

id quod ei non est molestum. Plutarch.

<sup>x</sup> Quinque abolent decretum durum; poenitentia, precatio, eleemosyna, mutatio et opera bona. Drus. ex RR. in Jonam.

himself, but because we change. God always resolved to punish the obstinate and spare the penitent; wherefore, when the obstinate doth repent, no former decree can oblige him to punish him, nay, he is glad of this opportunity to lay by his anger. Who can think he hath ingratefully sinned against such a God, and not have his heart rent with sorrow? And who can behold such a Father, and not run to him with shame for his disobedience, and yet with longing desires, nay, firm persuasions, to be accepted?

*Paraphrase.*

When you seek to God for pardon, be chiefly careful to RENT YOUR HEART with a sense of your sin and the fear of God's displeasure, till you be truly humbled, AND NOT only resting in the outward ceremony of renting YOUR GARMENTS; for the main thing is to amend your lives, AND TURN TO THE LORD in your ways, whom you call YOUR GOD with your lips; and then doubt not but you may be received; FOR HE IS GRACIOUS, even ready to do good to those that need it, AND MERCIFUL to pity all that are in misery, and to forgive their offences; he is SLOW TO ANGER, even most unwilling to punish, waiting long, because he is desirous to be reconciled, AND OF GREAT KINDNESS, nay, when he hath resolved to punish, he is more desirous to spare, AND REPENTETH HIM OF THE EVIL he purposed to inflict, when we repent of the evil which we have done.

16 *A Meditation on Joel ii. 13, preparatory to Prayer, for such as are apt to rest in the outward part.*

O my soul, thou art surely seized with a strange distemper, which resists the efficacy of the choicest remedies! the plaster which cures others doth not avail me. I confess my offences every day upon my bended knees, and yet my faith is weak, my hopes of pardon wavering, my sense of God's love very small; so that I am almost tempted to live like those who are unconcerned whether they sin or no, because I find no benefit by all my humiliations. And this temptation had prevailed, if I had not seen that (since others receive advantage from these

means) the fault is in me, and not in them, nor in the God I serve ; he cannot deny his promises, falsify his word, nor reject those when they come, who came upon his courteous invitation. O where then is this accursed thing that restrains God's mercy, blasts my endeavours, and puts me upon injurious thoughts against Heaven, and atheistical resolutions of totally neglecting these holy things. The matter of my duty is good, for God commands it ; the benefit is great, for many have found it ; but is it done in a right manner ? The failing may be there. Alas ! I have been careful to kneel reverently, look sadly, sigh grievously, and tell the Almighty the story of my sinful life with addresses becoming a penitent. But this comes far short of what God requires, even a broken spirit and a contrite heart ; for I have been so concerned to seem sorrowful, that I have not endeavoured really to be so. O my God, thou that searchest the heart, thou hast seen my heart untouched in the midst of these pretences : I have not been smitten with the sense of the odiousness of my sins to thee, nor their danger to me, and therefore I have not fully renounced them, nor yet absolutely returned to thee and thy ways ; and therefore thou hast not blessed my confessions, which have rather been looked upon by me as an indulgence to go on, (since my former offences were so easily pardoned,) than an engagement to forsake my iniquities ; but now I see my vileness in making so slight addresses for so great a favour. I discern my folly to cheat myself of so considerable a blessing, and my sloth to slip so many fair opportunities. By my deceitful behaviour before thee, O Lord, I have deceived myself ; I am hugely ashamed that, having offended so dear a Father, I have not been more really concerned, and having so gracious a God to turn to, I am yet so far distant from him. If I want pardon or peace, the blame must lie upon my own negligence, for thou art apt to give, and ready to forgive, long before thou punishest sinners, but soon entreated to receive penitents, and dost most joyfully lay aside thy resolutions of judgment, when we perform our purposes of amendment. O my soul, will not this real goodness of thy God shame thy hypocrisy ? Will it not pierce thy heart, to see whom thou hast offended, and thaw thy hopes, to behold whom thou art turning unto ? His holiness is mixed with longsuffering, his justice with mercy, his decrees



allayed with limitations; and is it fit to approach him without love or fear, hopes or desires, gratitude or admiration? Or is the forgiveness so mean a favour, that it deserves no more hearty applications? Sure enough my hypocrisy hath hindered my pardon, wherefore I begin to detest it, and hereafter I will look more to the dispositions of my heart than the posture of my body. I will set him before me whose love I have abused, and whose patience I have tired; who is so gracious to spare me, and so willing to be reconciled to me a most ungrateful wretch; that so when I come to him, I may have my eyes filled with tears, my cheeks with blushes, and my heart with sorrow. I will remember who I am that go, that I may be humble; what I go for, that I may be earnest; and who I go to, that I may be full of faith and hope: so shall my addresses not be in vain, but all these gracious attributes shall be made good to me. Amen.

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## SECTION II.

*Of the Exhortation after the Sentences.*

§. I. To these sentences of God's word, the church hath annexed a pertinent exhortation, lest any should not sufficiently understand these places, or not carefully practise what they know to be required by them. The words of scripture are first laid down, to shew we impose not this duty of confession upon you, but that God requires it; and then the minister proceeds to this pious exhortation deduced from them; that so what God commands may be rightly understood, particularly applied, and duly practised by all people. And that no man may plead ignorance or forgetfulness, to excuse him from this necessary duty, we are directed in the following words most plainly how to perform it, which is the first and principal use of this exhortation: but some pious souls have found out another, viz. when they use the Common Prayer in their private devotions, to turn it into a preparatory prayer before the Confession, with very little variation, in this or the like

manner: "Almighty God, who hast commanded us in sundry places of thy holy word to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of thy Divine Majesty; give us grace to confess our sins with an humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart; to the end we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by thy infinite goodness and mercy, and the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen." Which having hinted for their sakes who use the prayers of the church sometimes in private, we proceed to explain this exhortation as it is used in public.

THE ANALYSIS OR DIVISION OF THE EXHORTATION.

§. II. The parts of this Exhortation are three :	1. A loving compellation.		<i>Dearly beloved brethren, the scripture moveth us in sundry places, To acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, And that we should not dissemble nor cloak them Before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father, But confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, To the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same by his infinite goodness and mercy. Although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God, Yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together, 1. To render thanks for the great benefits we have received at his hands, 2. To set forth his most worthy praise, 3. To hear his most holy word, 4. To ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, As many as are here present, To accompany me to the throne of the heavenly grace, With a pure heart, And humble voice, saying after me.</i>	
	2. A profitable instruction, in which is shewed,	1. That we must confess,		Affirmatively,
				Negatively,
				The reason, because we are
				1. With a sense of sin,
		2. How we must confess,		2. A sorrow for it,
				3. Resolutions against it,
		3. Why we must confess,		For pardon,
				1. In general, always,
		4. When we must confess,		2. Especially, in public, where we meet for these four ends,
	3. An earnest supplication, in which there is	1. The person exhorting, . . .		Internally, . . . Externally, . . .
		2. The parties exhorted, . . .		
3. The thing requested,				
4. The manner of doing it,				

§. III. DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN.] The minister begins with this affectionate and courteous salutation, after the example of St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John, who frequently begin their exhortations in this language, the better to engage attention; for which cause it is used here; nor is it an idle compliment, but a significant indication from whence this admonition proceeds, viz. from love. For he that loves the souls of his people, and hears what God expects from them, and sees the danger of their neglect, cannot in pity suffer them to go on and perish without warning or instruction; and the people may see we have no ends of our own, but are engaged by love to become their monitors, as they are our dearly beloved brethren. Wherefore the admonitions of ministers should ever be accepted as the effects of their true affection, yet it proves too often otherwise. Flatterers and dissemblers that will extenuate or connive at our faults, are usually listed among our friends; but those who discover our danger, reprove our vices, and advise us to amend, these we hate as Ahab did Micaiah: for men are so foolish or unworthy, as not to distinguish between the reproaches of an enemy and the reproofs of a friend. It is true, when we have done evil there is some disgrace in both, but the management and design are directly contrary <sup>γ</sup>. Now if any reproof proceed from kindness, surely it must be this which comes from him that is your spiritual father, yet salutes you as brethren, and reckons himself under the same obligation, and toucheth your offences with much tenderness; only his Master hath charged that he shall reprove you, and not hate you in

<sup>γ</sup> Probra tam amicus quam inimicus objicit, *ὁ μὲν ἐχθρὸς ἐπι-* γελῶν, *ὁ δὲ φίλος εὐνοῶν.* Clem. Alex. Pædag. lib. 1. cap. 9.

heart, Levit. xix. 17: for the neglect of this duty would argue he cared not to see you perish.

§. IV. THE SCRIPTURE MOVETH US IN SUNDRY PLACES.] We may easily foresee if the minister did only by his own authority command us to repent, his words would prevail but little upon many; some might deny their guilt, many despise the summons, and others would think to avoid by recrimination. Wherefore the minister comes armed with *the sword of the Spirit, the word of God*; that as the prophets of the Old Testament came with *verbum Jehovah*, the word of the Lord, so might also the priests of the New. And though the person may be contemptible, yet it is the voice of God which you hear from him, and whoever be the proclaimer, *where the word of a king is, there is power*, Eccles. viii. 4. Who dare disobey when the King of heaven commands? He that knows the hearts of all, commands *all men every where to repent*, not only in the places now read, but in sundry other places\*, even throughout the whole scripture: and miserable will their case be, who refuse so many, so plain, and so earnest calls from such a God. We ministers are exhorted as well as you, and we intend to join with you, and if we request you to join with us, it is in obedience to the commission we have from the King of heaven, and he that *refuseth, refuseth not man, but God*; and that word of God which now moves you so frequently to repent, shall be produced against you to condemn you, if you obey it not.

§. V. TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND CONFESS OUR MANIFOLD SINS AND WICKEDNESS.] We need not here be curious in the difference between these words, though *to acknowledge* seems to signify the granting something laid to our charge; as David upon Nathan's first accu-

\* Isai. i. 16, 17. lv. 7; Lam. iii. 40, 41; Acts ii. 38. xvii. 30.

sation said, *I have sinned*, 2 Sam. xii. 13; and to *confess* may import a voluntary act when no man accuseth us, which indeed is the more acceptable and ingenuous; but it were well if we would but acknowledge our offences; for God in his word, by his ministers, and by our own consciences, doth indict us as guilty, and he that soonest owns the truth thereof shall most easily find mercy. But it may perhaps be more material to take notice of the epithet joined to our sins, *manifold*, which is borrowed from Amos v. 12, and may denote the variety of our transgressions, like Joseph's coat of many colours; for we are clothed with the redness of anger, the paleness of malice, the yellow of covetousness, the blackness of despair, or the green of presumption; in these changeable garments are our souls attired, when we put off the white garments of our innocence, or else (as the learned translator of the Liturgy) *πολλαπλασίας*, *multiplacia*; those iniquities which are so cunningly twisted and weaved together, by that accursed policy which Satan teacheth us to begin with many small threads of lesser sins, and by uniting these and twining them together, to proceed till we *draw iniquity with cords of vanity*, and at last *sin as it were with a cart rope*<sup>a</sup>. Perhaps we imagine it a piece of commendable craft<sup>b</sup>, to be able thus to contrive our wickedness; but alas! if God's mercy do not unravel it, it will at last be strong enough to draw us into eternal flames. We have used much study and pains to twist our sins together, that one may strengthen the other, and we are now warned by an humble and hearty confession to untwine and separate them again, that so we may not be bound in the bands of death.

<sup>a</sup> Isai. v. 18. Peccatum trahit retortum, unde signific. multis peccatum. Dict. RR. nexibus implicitum consilium.

<sup>b</sup> Job v. 13. Heb. פתל filum LXX. *πολυπλόκων* vertit ibid.

§. VI. AND THAT WE SHOULD NOT DISSEMBLE NOR CLOAK THEM BEFORE THE FACE OF ALMIGHTY GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.] It is the language of Satan's school, that we may cover one sin by committing another; but the scripture pronounceth a woe against this<sup>c</sup>, and sheweth the folly and danger of it, because it doubles the guilt<sup>d</sup> and hinders the pardon<sup>e</sup>. Wherefore God's word teacheth us, that we must neither dissemble our sins by excuses, as Saul<sup>f</sup> and Ananias<sup>g</sup>, nor cloak them with a flat denial, as Gehazi<sup>h</sup>, lest we be judged as they were. It is the manner of hypocrites and evil men, 1. to extenuate them with dissembling apologies and fair pretences; viz.—It was the first time—I was surprised—The effects of it were not very evil—Others have done worse, &c. Whereas the good man aggravates his sins with all those circumstances that make them heinous, and St. Paul calls himself *the chief of sinners*. 2. To deny they have sinned, and reckon themselves among the righteous, as the Pharisee did<sup>i</sup>, while Ezra<sup>k</sup> and Daniel put themselves in amongst sinners, which is much the safer way; for he that feigns himself better than he is, or denies himself to be sick before the physician, keeps his disease, and loses an opportunity to regain his perfect health. But remember thou art in God's house, nay, just before his face, and dost thou think with a lie or an excuse to deceive him? No, no; this is too thin a veil, and too short a cover for thy numerous transgressions, and will avail no more, than for a thief to deny he stole that which is found about him before the judge. If thou couldst

<sup>c</sup> 1 John i. 8, 9; Isai. xxx. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Negatio iniquitatis duplex iniquitas.

<sup>e</sup> Sect. i. §. 5.

<sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 15.

<sup>g</sup> Acts v. 2, 8.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Kings v. 25.

<sup>i</sup> Luke xviii. 11.

<sup>k</sup> Ezra ix. 6. Loquitur de culpis κατὰ κόλωνα, ne nimium arroganter se cæteris eximere videatur. Grotius in loc.

deny so impudently, or dissemble so cunningly, as to deceive all the world, yet do not hope to impose upon him that hath a heavenly, all-seeing eye to discern thee; he would shew the kindness of a father in thy pardon, if thou didst shew the ingenuity of a son in confessing. Wherefore, do not deceive thyself, nor slight this warning, for if thou dost, *be sure*, one time or other, *thy sin will find thee out*, Numb. xxxii. 23.

§. VII. BUT CONFESS THEM WITH AN HUMBLE, LOWLY, PENITENT, AND OBEDIENT HEART.] The word of God is not only a monitor to remember us of our duty, but a guide to direct us in the performance of it; it interposeth its authority to command us to repent, and then affordeth its directions to shew how we may repent; and they that would know how they must be affected when they confess, so that they may be sure to find pardon, cannot learn in fewer and more significant expressions, than the church hath here collected out of the holy scriptures; viz. 1. *an humble and lowly heart*, viz. when we behold our vileness by sin, till we have a mean opinion of ourselves, and can be content that God or men should disesteem us, since we have deserved it; such a heart the prodigal had, when he thought a servant's place too good for him, Luke xv. 19; such the publican, chap. xviii. 13, when he durst neither look up nor come near; and he that wants it, and thinks  
20 well of himself after his sin, cannot confess heartily, desire pardon devoutly, nor forsake that which he thinks hath done him no harm. Wherefore, let us labour to have this right knowledge of ourselves and of our sins; and that we may be ashamed of both, let us consider we have shewed much folly and rashness, disingenuity and ingratitude, obstinacy and perverseness, by breaking the holy laws of so great a God and so gracious a Father, for so small a price; and that we are thereby

so miserable, that we shall for ever be disgraced if we repent not. Sin is a more just cause of shame than any thing in the world, for it shews a man to be a base and abominable person; nay, it makes him degenerate into a beast<sup>1</sup>; which if we seriously think upon, it will beget in us a disesteem of ourselves, and a true opinion of our own unworthiness, which is an excellent disposition for the begging or receiving of pardon. 2. *A penitent heart*, viz. a sad and sorrowful spirit, which is most becoming one that sees his actions to have been base, vain, and dangerous, and therefore must ever accompany us in confession of our sins. Now if we are of ingenuous tempers, the gospel will produce this; for it discovers the wounds of Jesus which we have made, the longsuffering we have abused, the grace we have rejected, and the comforts and benefits we have lost and forfeited. But if we are more obdurate, the law must effect it, the sight of God's justice, the consideration of the curse we have deserved, and the danger we are in of endless torments for poor perishing pleasures; these things being duly weighed, will help us to draw water<sup>m</sup> before the Lord (as the Israelites did) from the pits of our hearts, and pour them out by the channels of our eyes; and this sorrow for what is past will both make our confession acceptable, and help us to the third requisite, 3. *an obedient heart*; that is, a taking up such a dislike against sin, as to resolve steadfastly, if we can get those pardoned we have committed, that we will never more do that which hath caused so much shame and sorrow to us. And till we have brought our hearts to this, all our confession and sorrow are not repentance,

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxxiii. 22. Οἱ μὲν ἀποκλίνοντες λύκοις ὅμοιοι γενόμεθα ἀπιστοὶ καὶ ἐπίβητοὶ καὶ βλαβηροί. Arrian. in Epict. lib. 1. cap. 3.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Sam. vii. 6. ubi Chal. Par.: Hauserunt aquas e puteo cordis sui et abunde lacrymati sunt coram Domino resipiscentes.



but only a purpose to repent, or a shadow of true penitence"; nor will all the rest prevail, either to a removal of the guilt or dominion of sin. Therefore let us learn how to confess; humility will make our confession sincere, sorrow will make it earnest, and holy purposes will make it prevalent.

§. VIII. TO THE END THAT WE MAY OBTAIN FORGIVENESS OF THE SAME, BY HIS INFINITE GOODNESS AND MERCY.] There is nothing more pleasant to us than the contemplation of God's infinite goodness and mercy; but we are therein apt to forget his justice, and to think the one will exclude the other. We measure God by ourselves, in whose narrow hearts these two dispositions are not at once contained; and hence when we hear of infinite mercy, we are apt to presume of pardon upon any terms; but the church from God's word assures us, that we cannot be forgiven, no, not by this infinite mercy, unless we bring an humble, penitent, and obedient heart; and that we are to esteem it infinite goodness, that we may be forgiven upon these terms. For we must know, that justice (without a mediator) doth not admit a sinner to second thoughts, nor accept of any repentance at all; and therefore it is an high act of grace, that so holy a God, so justly offended and highly provoked, will be reconciled upon any terms; and we must endeavour to get our hearts thus disposed, for if we be not so prepared, mercy itself will reject us. Some may here perhaps scruple at the expression, *to the end*, and question whether in our confession we ought not rather to aim at God's glory than our own forgiveness. Such must know they quarrel with the language of holy writ, Acts ii. 38,

<sup>η</sup> Δόκησιν τοίνυν μετανοίας τὸ πολλὰ πλημμελοῦμεν πολλάκις. Clem. λάκις αἰτεῖσθαι συγγνώμην ἐφ' οἷς Alex. Strom. 2.

iii. 19, where men are exhorted to repent that they may be forgiven; and further, they do not understand what God's glory is, if they separate it from his doing good to his creatures, and representing his excellencies to them. Wherefore, to aim at God's glory and our own forgiveness is all one; for by confessing, we own his power to forgive, we shew our trust in his goodness, and hope in his mercy, and desire that the Almighty, by accepting and doing us good, may demonstrate himself to be, what we believe him to be, viz. a God gracious and merciful, &c., that we and all the world may praise him for it, and set out his glory for evermore.

§. IX. AND ALTHOUGH WE OUGHT AT ALL TIMES <sup>21</sup> HUMBLY TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR SINS BEFORE GOD.] This concession of the church's declares, that the public prayers ought not to excuse any from private devotions. These we account the principal, but the other we recommend as very useful and necessary, so that we neither encourage the lazy, who neglect the private, nor allow the precise, who undervalue the public; one ought to be done, so as not to leave the other undone. We find our Saviour and his apostles (after the manner of the devout Jews) were wont to go to the temple and synagogues at the hours of prayer, and yet both he and they did seek retirements for more private devotions. And the scripture teacheth us to pray *at all times, in all places, and with all sorts of prayer*<sup>o</sup>, that none might be excused from either; nor can the one be alleged to exclude the other, for they are mutual helps to one another. He that hath been most careful in private confession, will be the fittest for, and most advantaged by the public; yet he that is so prepared must not think the coming to God's house superfluous, because we cannot do this too often nor too openly, since many

<sup>o</sup> Eph. vi. 18; 1 Tim. ii. 8; Psalm cxi. 1.

of our sins are manifest, and require a public declaration, and by this open confession we shall be freer from the suspicion of hypocrisy in our closet. We must remember we stand in need of God's help every moment, and therefore we have reason to beg it often, and we can never beg it in humility, unless we confess those sins that make us unworthy of it. And since we sin daily, a daily confession is highly requisite, and that not only in these general terms which we use with our brethren, but in the particular and secret remembrances of those offences which no eyes but God's ever saw. Nor will they be sufficiently bewailed where the soul doth not so particularly search out its private evils, the heinousness, occasions, and remedies of them, which cannot be performed without a true repentance, and if we have repented before, yet here we must repeat it; the reason of which is shewed in the next sentence.

§. X. YET OUGHT WE MOST CHIEFLY SO TO DO, WHEN WE ASSEMBLE AND MEET TOGETHER, TO RENDER THANKS FOR &c.] These four duties are so many arguments to prove confession especially necessary in the solemn assembly, because they are all then and there to be performed, and yet without penitence none of them will please God; and we learn here (by the way) the several parts of public worship, which is not much varied from the worship of the Jews, who served God in their synagogues by prayers, hymns, and hearing the law. The heathens came to the same ends also, only their temples were not the places where they learned wisdom, as ours are; but they came thither to glorify God for his excellencies, to praise him for his gifts, and to call for his help<sup>p</sup>. But this account of our public worship exactly agrees with that which St. Augustine gives of the Christian

Ἡ Τριῶν ἕνεκα θυρέον θεοῖς, ἡ διὰ τιμὴν, ἡ διὰ χάριν, ἡ διὰ χρεῖαν τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Porphy. *περί ἀποχ.* lib. 2.

assemblies in his time; for there the law of God was taught, his miracles commemorated, his bounty praised, and his blessings were prayed for<sup>q</sup>. And who can do any of these well, that hath not confessed his offences and repented of them? But this will be more plain by beholding the particulars. 1. We are to give God thanks for his benefits, but unless we see our sins, we may think we need not a Saviour, or are not much the better for spiritual mercies, and that we deserve those that are temporal. How can he praise God for his Son, who will not come to him? for his grace, that will not use it? or for the hopes of glory, that never seeks after it? 2. We should glorify his name by publishing his excellency in hymns and anthems of thanksgiving<sup>r</sup>. But how can the impenitent sinner commend that power which he sees not, or that holiness which he loves not, or that mercy that he seeks not after, or that love which he hath no experience of? The praises of such are next to mocking the Almighty, because their hearts cannot go along with their mouths in the glory they seem to ascribe to him. 3. We come to hear his most holy word; but if our hearts be not prepared by true penitence, we shall be neither wiser nor better; for sin unrepented of stops the ears of a man, hardens his heart, and fills his mind with presumption and security; it banisheth the Holy Spirit by filthiness and vain thoughts, and puts men rather upon hating and despising the good word of God, than embracing it, and submitting to it. What part of scripture can profit<sup>22</sup> such? Its exhortations they heed not, its comforts they need not, its threatenings they fear not, its promises they

<sup>q</sup> Veri Dei aut præcepta insinuantur, aut miracula narrantur, aut dona laudantur, aut beneficia postulantur. Aug. Civ. Dei,

lib. 2. cap. 28.

<sup>r</sup> St. Paul, Ephes. v., distinguisheth *ὑμνήσαντες* from *εὐχαριστοῦντες*.

value not; they hate its instructions, and despise its reproofs; so that the messenger of God may say in his Master's language, Hos. vi. 4, *What shall I do unto thee?*

4. We come to pray for what is needful for our bodies and souls. But what prince will accept a petition from the hands of a rebel that disowns not his treason? Much less will the King of heaven receive his request whose very prayer is abominable, Prov. xv. 8. If such a man ask for his body, he asks that which he intends to spend on his lusts, and so seems to desire God to become the provider<sup>s</sup> for them, who will not minister fuel to this flame, unless he intend to consume you. If he lengthen your life, continue your health, or increase your wealth, you will turn the edge of these against God who bestowed them on you, and grow more confident to despise him to your own ruin; so that if he have any mercy for you, he will not hear you. But as to begging any thing for the soul, it may be questioned whether he that lives in sin believes he hath such a jewel, when he prizes it no higher than a lust, and exposeth it daily on the dunghill of sin. But if he do believe it, he is so careless of it, that he will either ask nothing for it, or however nothing heartily, because he apprehends not his danger, nor sees his wants, nor cares he whether they be supplied or no; and what good will the repetition of the words of prayer do to such a person? In fine, it is most evident, that though repentance be at all times necessary, yet it is then indispensably so, when we go about these holy duties, or we shall not only lose the benefit of them, but meet a curse instead of a blessing; therefore, as you love your souls, and hope to please God in these duties, despise not this necessary exhortation.

<sup>s</sup> Rom. xiii. ult. *πρόβουαν ποιεῖν*. Græc.

§. XI. WHEREFORE I PRAY AND BESEECH YOU, AS MANY AS ARE HERE PRESENT] The priest saluted you courteously at first, and now again most lovingly entreats you, knowing that men must be courted to their own good. And herein St. Paul leads the way<sup>t</sup>, who teacheth us to *pray and beseech you in Christ's stead*<sup>u</sup>. O despise not the lowliness of the address, but admire the condescension of him that makes it; who can destroy, and yet entreats, as if himself and not you were to receive the favour. It is he that speaks by the minister, to whom you are about to pray in the Collects, and to beseech in the Litany, and remember that he first prays and beseecheth you to repent; so that if you desire your prayers should reach heaven, let these requests sent by God's messengers move you all to repentance, for you all intend to pray. Men are very apt to shew their folly, 2 Cor. x. 12, Luke xviii. 11, in comparing themselves with one another, and many think they have not so much need as others to make this confession; but it is the law of God, and not others' practice, that must be our rule, because we are all sinners. What glory was it to Tamar to be more righteous than Judah<sup>x</sup>, or to the Jews to be holier than the Chaldeans<sup>y</sup>, when both were wicked? We shall never rightly judge of our ways, if we measure them by a crooked stick. But suppose we are better than others, that doth not make confession needless. Though no man could charge us, no nor our own consciences, yet is it not safe to plead not guilty, 1 Cor. iv. 4, Job ix. 15, before a God who examines so narrowly, sees so exactly, and remembers so perfectly, that the best had need to crave for mercy. This confession is so general,

<sup>t</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 16; 2 Cor. ii. 8.

<sup>u</sup> 2 Cor. v. 20.

<sup>x</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 26.

<sup>y</sup> Habak. i. 13. Id est, minus improbi; illis quidem justiores, revera nequissimi. Drus.

that it is universally true of all, and so particularly applicable to every man's case, that we invite all to it; the Pharisee must not think himself too good, nor the publican doubt himself too bad to make it. The church doth not allow of those dangerous persuasions which have puffed some up with arrogance and presumption, as if their sins were already absolutely forgiven; for if so, what need they be obliged to a daily repentance, or to ask for what they have already? But, alas! they are pardoned only in their own opinion, and when such false imaginations make men proud, that pride is enough to reverse the grant, if God had once consented to absolve them. On the other side, we do advise the greatest sinners to repent, rejecting those discouraging doctrines of men's eternal reprobation, which some think not reversible by any endeavours; for we do not know of any  
 23 living man that may not be pardoned<sup>z</sup>; wherefore we pray and beseech the most dejected persons not to be discouraged, because they have stayed so long, but to hasten, because they have no more time left; for he only is in danger of being for ever cast off, who hearing these summons doth not obey them. Let no man then go about to excuse himself, for it is the duty of every man present in God's house.

§. XII. To ACCOMPANY ME] The Jews were never allowed under the law to enter into the temple, but the priest alone went every day<sup>a</sup> into the outer part of it to burn incense; but to the mercy-seat, or most holy place none might come, except the high priest once a year, but the people always remained in the outward court, and prayed there; for which purpose were those stone tables there made which the Talmud speaks of<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>z</sup> In isto adhuc mundo manenti pœnitentia nulla sera est: patet ad indulgentiam Dei aditus. Cypr. ad Demetr.

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xxx. 7; Luke i. 10; Heb. ix. 6, 7.

<sup>b</sup> Tract. שְׁמִינִי cap. 6.

The king indeed was admitted into the inner court where the priests did<sup>c</sup> sacrifice; but when a prince would have entered into the temple, Azariah is commended for resisting him, because the priests alone were to come so near<sup>d</sup>. But now we have more freedom, for every Christian is one of God's household<sup>e</sup>, and though the order of priesthood is not taken away, yet the privilege of the people is enlarged, so that Philo's brag is always true of us<sup>f</sup>; every man is now a priest to offer up his own prayers and praises, and that not without; for we are led in by the hand to the very throne of grace<sup>g</sup> by Christ, or the priest, who is his representative, and have liberty to speak<sup>h</sup> freely for ourselves before the King of heaven and earth: which we ought to esteem as a high act of favour, and most thankfully to embrace it, since we are now no longer to stand without, and send in our petition by the hands of a servant, but are admitted, nay, requested to come in ourselves, in the company of God's messenger, who hath the same errand for himself, and therefore is likely to be the more concerned and importunate. The minister is that ambassador whom God sent to bring you out of your evil ways, Acts xxvi. 18, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; and O how acceptable will it be to God to see him return with you in his hand! and how comfortable to his minister, when he can say, "Behold me, and the children thou hast given me!" Wherefore let him not go alone, but be you always present, and join in the confession; for otherwise, if he go without you, he can-

<sup>c</sup> 2 Kings xi. 11; 1 Kings viii. 22; 1 Chron. vi. 10.

<sup>d</sup> Levit. x. 3. Sanctificabor in propinquis meis. Montani vers. Periphrasis sacerdotum. Piscat. in locum.

<sup>e</sup> Ephes. ii. 19.

<sup>f</sup> Σύμψαν τὸ ἔθνος ἱερᾶται. Philo.

<sup>1</sup> Pet. ii. 6.

<sup>g</sup> Ephes. ii. 18. Gr. προσάγωγόν.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. iv. 16. μετὰ παύσησιν. See Acts xxvi. 1.



not but complain of you<sup>i</sup>, and must sigh when his Lord inquires for you, which will be more your loss than his: he hath done his duty in inviting, and though he lose the comfort of your company, yet you lose the benefit of his, and the pardon annexed, because you neglect so precious an opportunity, and you seem to send a daily denial by the hands of God's special messenger, when you do not accompany him.

§. XIII. WITH A PURE HEART AND HUMBLE VOICE, TO THE THRONE OF THE HEAVENLY GRACE, SAYING AFTER ME] The various rites of washings and cleansings, which all nations used before they approached to their temples, were only to mind them of purity of heart, which the heathens knew to be necessary for all that drew near to God<sup>k</sup>; wherefore in their sacrifices the unclean were commanded out by the voice of a crier<sup>l</sup>. Much more ought Christians to come with a pure heart, which inward purity we account the principal requisite of the prayer; but withal we require that the tongue shall be used as the interpreter of the desires of the soul, and therefore it is added that we must pray with an humble voice. This was Pythagoras's precept of old<sup>m</sup>, to pray with an audible voice; and though the Jewish doctors allow private prayers when the lips only move<sup>n</sup>, yet in public worship, God himself commanded open and vocal confessions, and particularly when the sin-offering was presented, the party was to lay his hand on the head of it, and say, "Lord, I am guilty of death, I have deserved to be stoned for such a sin, to

<sup>i</sup> Isai. liii. 1; Heb. xiii. 17.—  
καὶ μὴ στενάζοντες.

<sup>k</sup> Δεινὸν εἶη εἰ πρὸς τὰ δῶρα καὶ τὰς θυσίας ἀποβλέπουσιν ἡμῶν οἱ θεοί, ἀλλὰ μὴ πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν, ἃν τις ὅσιος καὶ δίκαιος ὦν τυγχάνῃ. Plato in Alcib.

<sup>l</sup> Ἐκὰς ἔστε βίβηλοι. 2 Tim. ii. 22.

<sup>m</sup> Μετὰ φωνῆς εἶχεσθαι, Pythag. dictum.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Sam. i. 13, et Grotius in loc.

be strangled for such and such transgression, to be burnt for these and these crimes<sup>o</sup>." And to come nearer, we find public confession in the Christian church<sup>p</sup>, and injunctions for every man to speak up in his acknowledgments, that so our repentance may be as visible as <sup>24</sup> our sins, and that God may be glorified<sup>q</sup> by an open and humble request, which even a man would expect from his inferior that had offended him. In other prayers it will suffice to seal them with Amen, and set our name at the bottom; but this must be all in our own words and under our own hand, to justify God, to take shame to ourselves, and to encourage our brethren. The scripture requires in some cases we should confess our sins to men; but what can we think of those that will not confess them to God, no not in these general terms which may be said by the best of men too truly. Surely these men are either pharisaical, and suppose they have no sins worth confessing; or hypocritical, and would not be taken for sinners; or they are carnal and senseless, neither feeling their load, nor fearing their danger. When the prince comes by a prison, all the prisoners fall on their knees, and every man begs a pardon; but if one or two are silent, or stand off, we should judge that they were confident in their innocence, or obstinate in their wickedness, and fearless of the punishment. Such a censure may too justly be passed upon those who either come not to the confession, or do not speak the words of it in that humble and audible voice which the church requires and God expects; for he will lose his glory in pardoning thee, if thou hast not first publicly made thy recantation, and confessed thy guilt with thy own mouth.

<sup>o</sup> See Munster on Num. v. 7.

<sup>p</sup> Acts xix. 18. Ordinatur ut suis quisque verbis resipiscen-  
tiam profiteretur. Basil. Ep. 3.

<sup>q</sup> Homo es et vis rogari, et  
putas Deum tibi non roganti  
ignoscere. Ambros. de pen.  
lib. 2.

*The Paraphrase of the Exhortation.*

DEARLY BELOVED, this courteous admonition proceeds from my true affection to your souls, which you must not despise, because I am one of your BRETHREN, for I speak not from myself, but from the mouth of God ; it is he who in THE SCRIPTURE MOVETH US IN SUNDRY PLACES (as well as in those I have now read) seriously to consider our thoughts, words, and works, and then TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND CONFESS how many ways, how frequently, and how sadly we have disobeyed his will and broken his laws, by OUR MANIFOLD SINS AND WICKEDNESS which we have so cunningly and closely twisted together. But the word of God commands us to discover them, AND THAT WE SHOULD NOT DISSEMBLE the heinousness of our transgressions by plausible excuses or feigned pretences, NOR CLOAK THEM by impudent denials, when we are justly charged with them ; for it is the manner of hypocrites so to do, and it is also dangerous thus to excuse or deny our sins BEFORE THE FACE OF ALMIGHTY GOD, who knows our guilt, and will be provoked to destroy us for this hypocrisy and presumption, though he be OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, and would forgive us, if we confessed them like ingenuous children. O let us not therefore any longer excuse or hide our sins, BUT CONFESS THEM, as he commandeth us, and in such manner as he directs us ; first, WITH AN HUMBLE, LOWLY heart, being duly affected with a sense of our vileness, for our frequent and heinous provocations of so gracious a God. And this we must acknowledge, secondly, with a PENITENT heart, full of unfeigned sorrow for the comforts that we have either lost or forfeited, and for the vengeance and miseries which we have deserved. And when we perceive that our sins were the cause of all this evil, that may help us to confess them, thirdly, with a holy AND OBEDIENT HEART, resolving, if we be now admitted to God's favour, that we will henceforth forsake them, and carefully observe all his blessed will. And truly these dispositions are necessary in the confessing of our offences, TO THE END THAT WE MAY OBTAIN that which we seek for, even the FORGIVENESS OF THE SAME, because no pardon can be had otherwise, though God should deal with us never so favourably OF HIS INFINITE GOODNESS AND MERCY ; for he cannot forgive us

on any terms but such as are consistent with his truth and holiness. **AND ALTHOUGH WE** who are born in sin, and do every day more or less commit iniquity, in reason OUGHT AT ALL TIMES every day, even in our private closets, **HUMBLY TO ACKNOWLEDGE** and secretly to bewail **OUR SINS BEFORE GOD**, who sees the commission, and hears the confession of them in the most secret place; **YET OUGHT WE** not to think when we have done this in private, that it excuseth us from confessing in God's house, for it is our duty **MOST CHIEFLY SO TO DO WHEN WE ASSEMBLE AND MEET TOGETHER** there; for then we have many duties of great concernment to perform, none of **25** which can be done so as we shall be profited by them, or God pleased with them, unless we first do truly repent. As, first, we come hither **TO RENDER THANKS FOR THE GREAT BENEFITS WE HAVE RECEIVED AT HIS HANDS**; for life and health, food and raiment, peace and plenty, and especially for our redemption, instruction, sanctification, and hopes of glory; but the impenitent abuse the mercies of this life, and despise those that would bring them to a better life, and therefore cannot sincerely give thanks for either. Secondly, we come **TO SET FORTH HIS MOST WORTHY PRAISE**; but without repentance all the glorious titles given unto God are nothing but compliment or flattery; and such men do not believe what they speak of God; for if they did, his power would terrify them, his goodness shame them, his grace would invite them, and his mercy encourage them to turn to him; and if our praises work not this, they are in vain. Thirdly, we come **TO HEAR HIS MOST HOLY WORD**, which calls upon us in the first place to repent, and if we begin not there, it is likely we shall be deaf to its exhortations, slight its reproofs; refuse its commands, despise its threatenings, and disbelieve or disregard its promises, and so all will be lost upon us. Fourthly, we come to this house of prayer **TO ASK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REQUISITE AND NECESSARY**, either towards our being or well-being, even all that is requisite **AS WELL FOR THE BODY AS THE SOUL**. But if we do not first repent, we know God heareth not sinners, nor will he give them temporal mercies, to confirm them in their sin; nor spiritual, to trample under their feet. **WHERE-**

FORE, since we are come into the house of God to worship and serve him, and all we can do will be esteemed but a mocking of God without repentance, I, the ambassador of that God to whom you intend to pray, even I PRAY AND BESEECH YOU, in his name, AS MANY AS ARE HERE PRESENT, high and low, rich and poor, young and old; whether you are the best of the congregation or the worst of sinners, TO ACCOMPANY ME in making this confession to our great Lord, who commanded me to bring you with me, and will most mercifully accept and lovingly embrace us all. O then come along with me, and confess your sins WITH A PURE HEART, void of all hypocrisy, AND also with an HUMBLE VOICE, expressing the sorrow of your minds, and accusing yourselves in your own words, since you have deserved shame; and fear not that your own testimony shall condemn you, for you are going, not to a human tribunal, but TO THE THRONE OF THE HEAVENLY GRACE, where he sits who did invite you, and doth wait for you, and will forgive you, do not fear it; neither trouble yourselves how to bespeak him who is in heaven, for if you be willing to go with me I will be your mouth, only you must consent to and seal every sentence by SAYING AFTER ME this most hearty confession following,

## SECTION III.

26

## OF THE DAILY CONFESSION.

*The Analysis or Division of the Confession.*

This pious Confession is so methodically composed, that it naturally falls into these four parts: 1. the introduction; 2. the confession, properly so called; 3. a deprecation of evil; 4. a petition for good.

- |  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| I. The introduction, in which is shewed,   | { 1. To whom it is made,<br>2. By whom it is made, by us, ... we             | to our                                       | { Almighty and most merciful Father,                              |   |
| II. The confession itself.                 | In general,  | 1. That we have sinned, .....                | { have erred and strayed from thy ways                            |   |
|  |  | how we have sinned, .....                    | { like lost sheep ;   |   |
|  | 2. In particular,  | 1. Of the cause, improving our original sin, |   | { We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts ; |
|  |  | 2. Of the effect, doing actual sin,          | In general disobedience,  | { We have offended against thy holy laws ;                              |
|  |  |  | In sins of omission,  | { We have left undone those things which we ought to have done ;        |
| In sins of commission,                     |  |  | { And we have done those things which we ought not to have done ; |   |
| 3. In a conclusion from both .....         |  | { And there is no health in us :             |   |   |
| III. The deprecation of the evil.          | 1. What we would be delivered from, and 2. The reasons annexed to every one. | 1. From the guilt of sin, .....              | { But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us                            |   |
|  |  | With the reason, because we are .....        | { miserable offenders :   |   |
|  |  | 2. From the punishment of it, ....           | { Spare thou them, O God,   |   |
|  | 3. An argument to enforce the deprecation.                                   | With the reason, because we are of those     | { that confess their faults :                                     |   |
|  |  | 3. From the power of it, .....               | { Restore thou  |   |
|  |  | With the reason, because we are of .....     | { them that are penitent ;  |   |
|  |  | 1. From the promises in general. ....        | { According to thy promises declared                              |   |
| 2. The manner of giving them, ....         | { unto mankind   |  |   |   |
| 3. The person to whom they are given,      | { in Christ Jesu our Lord.   |  |   |   |
| IV. Petition for good.                     | 1. Of whom we desire it, .....   | { And grant, O most merciful Father,         |   |   |
|  | 2. Through whom we desire it, .....  | { for his sake,                              |   |   |
|  | 3. What we desire,   | 1. To live hereafter .....                   | { That we may hereafter live                                      |   |
|  |  | In piety to God, .....                       | { a godly,  |   |
|  |  | 2. Charity with others, .....                | { righteous,  |   |
|  | 3. Temperance toward ourselves, ...  | { and a sober life,                          |   |   |
| 4. Why we desire it, or to what end, ..... | { To the glory of thy holy name. Amen.                                       |  |   |   |

27 *A Practical Discourse on the general Confession.*

§. I. ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL FATHER] The church hath been curious and exact to select such titles for God in the beginning of every prayer, as are most proper to the petitions to which they are prefixed, and most likely to produce suitable affections in him that useth them; which, as it is every where apparent to a considering person, so may it appear particularly in the fitness of these two compellations to the subsequent confession. The first is *Almighty*, being an acknowledgment of the greatness of him whom we have offended<sup>a</sup>; and it denotes his being all-sufficient in himself for his own happiness, (as the philosopher defined him,) as also his being able to supply all our wants. And further, it signifies his absolute dominion over all the world, and his infinite power to do whatever he pleaseth. So that the consideration of this attribute shews us that we have sinned against a God whom we cannot hurt by our sins; we may indeed harm ourselves by them, both by stopping the current of those blessings which restrain and refresh us, and by provoking him to let loose his anger to destroy us. And if the shutting his hand of bounty would make us perish for want, sure then the weight of his arm of power will crush us to pieces, which we must meditate on so long till our hearts are pierced with a religious fear and holy dread of the anger of this Almighty God; only this fear must not drive us from him, but draw us more speedily to him, and be as the needle<sup>b</sup>, which

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xvii. 1. Heb. *יְהוָה* LXX. *αὐταρκής* and Job xxii. 15. *παντοκράτωρ*. Aqu. *ικανός καὶ ἀλκιμος*. Theo. *ικανὸν καὶ δυνατὸν*, h. e. *αὐταρκής πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν*. Speusippus. *Ἰπᾶ* suis contenta

opibus, nil indigna nostri. Lucretius.

<sup>b</sup> Si nullus est timor, non est qua charitas intret, sicut setam introducere filum videmus, sed nisi exit seta non succedit linum;

enters not to stay, but to make way for the thread of a uniting love; for the heart will be the faster bound to, 2ndly, *the most merciful Father*, when it is first made sensible it hath offended a dreadful, almighty God. He yet retains the bowels as well as the name of a Father, and is the most merciful of all fathers. For what natural parent would not have cast out and disinherited his once dearest child, for the one half of what we have done against our heavenly Father? Yet upon our true repentance he stands ready to embrace us with as much love as if we had never done amiss. If fear will move our hearts, here is represented his terrible power; if love will work upon us, here is discovered his unspeakable goodness; and what heart can resist both? His almightiness is first, but if the terror thereof seal up thy lips, let the hope of his fatherly pity and compassion open them again. Learn humility and true contrition from the first, and faith and hope from the latter, which are excellent mixtures in a penitent heart, and the best dispositions in the world for a hearty and prevailing confession.

§. II. WE HAVE ERRED AND STRAYED FROM THY WAYS] God's laws are frequently in holy scripture compared to a way that leads to everlasting life, and thither we are going while we are walking in them. But our sins and iniquities are errings and strayings out of this path. In our lesser, sudden, and unobserved sins, we *err* and step aside. Vain thoughts, rash and idle words, light and foolish carriages, make our way crooked<sup>c</sup>. And these happen so frequently, that at best we go on but in contorted spiral lines, which is far from the straight-

sic timor occupat mentem prior, verum non ibi manet quia ideo intravit, ut introduceret charitatem. Aug. in 1 Ep. Johan. [ix. 4.]

<sup>c</sup> Heb. נָסַח sig. peccatum et curvum. Eccles. vii. 13; Psalm xxxviii. 16; Job xxxiii. 27; Matt. xvii. 17. γὰρ διςτραμμένη.



ness and evenness of our rule; when these are done out of ignorance, they are called *errors*; and though we think them small in their kind, yet they are formidable in their numbers, and next to infinite. But besides these little wanderings, we stray further, and stay longer, we fall into greater transgressions and evil habits; these are open forsaking of God's ways, and a plain passing over those bounds which God hath set to us, as Solomon did to Shimei<sup>d</sup>; and by so doing we forfeit our lives, as he did his, if the Divine mercy did not spare us. And thus malice and envy, lust and drunkenness, pride and cruelty, covetousness and oppression, (especially when by frequent repetitions they are become customary,) may be called *straying from his ways*. It is very likely, many in favour to their own cause will count their errors no sins, and call their strayings errors and infirmities; but the least are committed so often, 28 that they are not to be despised, and the greater are so heinous they cannot be hid; and we should consider, that be the sin what it will, if we repent not, we still wander further, and so an error ends in going astray. To have stepped aside may seem excusable by human frailty; he must be more than man that doth not so sometimes; but he that sees his error and goes on, is worse than a beast, and wholly inexcusable<sup>e</sup>. We have all erred by less, and strayed by greater sins; but if we hasten our repentance, our strayings shall be forgiven and esteemed as errors; otherwise the lesser evils, if we cherish them and neglect repentance, will increase and become the utter deserting of God's ways.

§. III. LIKE LOST SHEEP] The church chooseth to express our departure from God in the language of the

<sup>d</sup> 1 Kings ii. 37, ubi עבר sig. transire limites, ut et Jos. iv. 1. at Deut. xvii. 2, &c. sig. peccare.

<sup>e</sup> Humanum est errare; beluinum vero perseverare in errore. Cicero.

Holy Ghost; for God and his Son Jesus are compared to the shepherds, and we to the sheep of their pasture<sup>f</sup>; by our sins we become lost sheep<sup>g</sup>, as David<sup>h</sup> and those in Isaiah confess themselves to be. But Jesus comes to seek and save us, Matt. xv. 24, Luke xv. 4. Alas, how frequently do we forsake the safe fold, the pure streams, and the green pasture which God hath provided for us, and wander into a dry and barren wilderness, where we want all true comforts, and are exposed to a thousand evils! And then these errings and strayings of ours are fitly resembled by a lost sheep, as appears in three particulars: 1. No creature is more apt to stray than the sheep, which is so heedless that it would never keep right, were it not continually under the shepherd's eye: so while we greedily feed on worldly contents, we daily go forward, not observing whether we are right or wrong, so that we easily fall into offences, and seldom keep long in God's ways. Again, 2, nothing is more open to dangers, when it doth stray, than this shiftless creature, which hath many enemies, and no defence against them: the dog is too swift, the wolf too strong, and the fox too cunning for it, so that it becomes a prey to all. Even so poor silly man, when he hath left his good Shepherd, is entangled in the thorns of worldly cares, ensnared by Satan, oppressed by wicked men, and pursued by his own conscience, and hath neither policy nor strength enough to contend with, nor swiftness sufficient to fly from these his enemies. Lastly, the straying sheep is most unlikely of itself ever to return; for supposing it should miss the ravenous enemies, it is so stupid and inobservant, that it would stray for ever, unless the shepherd find it and restore it. And just

<sup>f</sup> Psalm xxiii. 1, and c. 3, 4;  
John x. 1, 2, &c.

<sup>g</sup> Isai. liii. 6.

<sup>h</sup> Psalm cxix. 176.

thus (God knows) it is with us, who wander up and down, forgetting whence we are fallen, and ignorant how to return again, changing the kinds of our sins sometimes, but never likely to find the right path, till the good Shepherd of our souls (who comes *to seek that which was lost*) cause us to hear his voice behind us, Isai. xxx. 21, John x. 4, and we turn and follow him. Thus by this one significant metaphor, we own God for our true Shepherd, and ourselves to be his sheep; poor helpless creatures, apt to stray, and in our wanderings likely to perish by many enemies and great dangers, unlikely and unable ever to return, unless he please to forgive our sin, forget our folly, pity our misery, and come to seek and save us. We feel ourselves near lost already, for we have not minded our Shepherd's voice, nor heeded his steps, who, (as the custom of the Eastern shepherds was,) John x. 4. Psalm lxxvii. 20, did himself walk before us; we have not followed him in the right way, but either run on after one another's bad example, or sometimes chosen the treacherous directions of the wolf and fox, before those of our dear Shepherd, to whom therefore we now cry to rescue and restore us.

§. IV. WE HAVE FOLLOWED TOO MUCH THE DEVICES AND DESIRES OF OUR OWN HEARTS] Confession ought to be a giving glory to God, Josh. vii. 19. Jer. xiii. 6, and therefore we must beware ours prove not a dishonouring of him, by charging God himself with our sins. Our treacherous hearts love the sin too well, yet they would fain lay the blame and shame upon some other. Adam will tacitly charge God himself<sup>i</sup> rather than want an apology to excuse his crimes; and they imitate

<sup>i</sup> Gen. iii. 12. Natura hominis proclivis in vitia videri vult, cum ratione peccare. Lact. Inst. lib. 4.  
non modo cum venia, sed etiam

his example, who lay the blame of their actual transgressions upon their original corruption, thinking they are the more excusable, because they were naturally inclined to it. Let such know, the inclinations of our nature do not necessitate us to sin; but we sin by com-<sup>29</sup>plying with them, by following of them, and by the neglect of God's restraining grace; and so no blame can be imposed on him that hath left these Canaanites to try us, since he provides and offers sufficient help and defence against them; nor can any excuse be made for us who love them, and strengthen them, and daily make covenants with them. It is our misery that our nature is so evil disposed; but it is our fault<sup>k</sup> when we reject God's directions, neglect his assistance, and take these false principles and vitiated appetites for our guides. Wherefore we here confess it to be our great fault (not that we have these evil devices and desires, but) that we have *followed* them. That which divines call *original sin* is by the Jews<sup>l</sup> styled *the evil device*, and here most significantly *the devices and desires of our hearts*. This is that universal corruption which hath overspread the soul. While man retained the Divine image, there was a quickness and comprehensiveness in the intellectual powers to discern what was truly good, a readiness in the will to choose it, and in the affections to make after it. But now the understanding is dull and shallow, confused with wrong notions, and busied in devising evil; the will is misguided in its choice; the affections unruly in their prosecutions. We search with labour and industry for fine dresses and plausible excuses for sin, and then we begin to fall in love with evil, and greedily desire it, so that our un-

<sup>k</sup> Nemo de vitiis naturalibus, sed de voluntariis poenas luit. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. 12. cap. 3.

<sup>l</sup> Gen. vi. 5. Heb. יצר הרע fig-  
mentum malum. Vatab.

derstanding is enslaved to our appetites, and must pronounce for it. And when we have devised how to call evil good, we are hurried on to desire it with the blindness and violence<sup>m</sup> of unguided affections that end in ruin. Thus we *devise* how to present riches and plenty, ease and pleasure, honour and esteem, satisfaction and revenge to ourselves, in so pleasing a garb, that they may pass for excellent things, and then we mightily *desire* them, contriving ways to obtain them, and then pursue those ways with expense of our time and estates, with continual care, mighty pains, and restless endeavours. We suppose we cannot be happy without them, although it is most sure we can never have fast hold of them; the child may as soon catch the rainbow as we these flying shadows, which have no reality but only in our imagination. But it will be well now we have wearied ourselves with an endless and vain chase, if we will be so wise as to sit down, breathing out sighs, and making sad reflections on what we have done; for if we can consider, we may easily discern that our devices have failed, our desires been unsatisfied, our expectations frustrated, and our pains unrewarded; and therefore we have good cause to confess we have followed them *too much* already, and to resolve to be abused no more, because they lead us into all sin, and yet yield nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit for all our venture and pains.

§. V. WE HAVE OFFENDED AGAINST THY HOLY LAWS] Our gracious God hath made his law a lamp<sup>n</sup>, to lighten the darkness of our minds; a counsellor<sup>o</sup>, to direct the weakness of our judgment; a guide<sup>p</sup>, to conduct our unsteady actions, that we might not miss our way to

<sup>m</sup> Hi motus, si ratione destituntur, in præcepta rapiuntur et rapiunt. Macrobius. som. Scip. lib. 2. cap. 16.

<sup>n</sup> Psalm cxix. 105.

<sup>o</sup> Psalm cxix. 24.

<sup>p</sup> Psalm xxxii. 8.

true happiness. But when we will be our own directors, and call that good which God calls evil, neglecting what he commands, and desiring what he forbids, then we forsake this our guide, we come into a wrong way by our false devices, and we run fast by our greedy and evil desires; and so *we transgress God's holy laws*, as St. John teacheth, 1 John iii. 4, James i. 17. This also is the exact pedigree of sin, which St. James sheweth to be conceived in the devices of the mind, nourished by the desires of the heart, and produced by following both these; so it was in the first of God's laws which was broken by our first parents<sup>q</sup>, and so it is ever since; these evil principles endeavour first a connivance, then a consent, and lastly, even compel us to break God's holy laws, when once they have gotten the power. But we may observe in this general sentence four aggravations of all actual sins. 1. They are done against a law enacted in heaven, and proclaimed over the whole earth, and particularly among us, by divers special messengers, so that we cannot pretend ignorance. 2. Not only against one or two, but many laws, and if we search narrowly, it will appear in many things we have broken all; the law of nature, the Decalogue of Moses, the precepts of Christ, and the injunctions of the apostles. It is a bad sign when so many obstacles cannot stop us, and it doth increase our guilt when all these 30 laws will not restrain us. 3. These sins are not against the laws of any mortal prince, but against his laws who is the King of kings, the God of heaven, whose dominion over us is so absolute, his wisdom so infinite, and his power so great, that David (though accountable to no human tribunal<sup>r</sup>) thought it aggravation enough

<sup>q</sup> Oculus videt, cor concupiscit, et instrumenta operis pergunt ad agendum. Fagius.

COMBER, VOL. I.

<sup>r</sup> Psalm li. 4. Hieron. Epist. ad Rustic. Ambros. in loc. Isidor. Peleus. Ep. ita explicant.

F

merely to have offended him; and the lesser the sin be, the greater is the baseness to offend against so glorious a King as he is<sup>s</sup>; where the temptation is so slight, the gain so small, and the resistance so easy, it is highly criminal to break the commands of such a majesty.

4. These our offences are against most holy laws, which none of us can plead against, that they are either unjust or unfit, impossible or unreasonable, because our consciences testify for them, and our sober reason approves of them, even when our affections entice us to disobey them. Let us then before our confession enlarge these particulars by a serious meditation, and it will help us to acknowledge more sorrowfully, and sue more earnestly, and resolve more firmly against them.

§. VI. WE HAVE LEFT UNDONE THOSE THINGS WHICH WE OUGHT TO HAVE DONE, AND WE HAVE DONE THOSE THINGS WHICH WE OUGHT NOT TO HAVE DONE] The perfect rule which God hath given us doth prescribe us what we ought to do, (and those prescriptions are called the *affirmative precepts*), and also forbids us those things which we ought not to do (which prohibitions are called the *negative precepts*<sup>t</sup>). Now the breach of an affirmative precept, or leaving a duty undone, is called a sin of *omission*; the breach of a negative, or doing what ought not to be done, is a sin of *commission*; which division comprehends all the sins that can be committed against the Divine law, and it is used here, because it is large enough to take in all the crimes of the worst; yet, alas! it is too suitable to the actions of the best,

<sup>s</sup> Nec tam considerat quid iussum est, quam illum qui iusserit, nec quantitatem imperii, sed imperantis cogitat dignitatem. Hieron. Ep. 14. ad Celant.

<sup>t</sup> The Jewish rabbins number

613 precepts in all (so many as there are letters in the Decalogue); of which the affirmative are 248 (so many as the joints in a man's body), and the negative 365 (so many as there are days in one year).

who cannot deny they have often offended in both kinds. It would be tedious here to insert a particular catalogue; and if we be in our closet, and have time, we may find such a table as will help us to reckon up the particulars both in the "Whole Duty of Man," and the "Companion to the Altar." And though we be in the church, yet if we can get any time to be private between God and our own souls, because there is much deceit in generals, I shall advise, that before our confession we call to mind some sins of both sorts; viz. sins of omission, as neglecting or ill performing of the duties of prayer, hearing, receiving the sacraments; as also of matters moral, the omission of alms, obedience to our superiors, charity to our brethren's souls, together with our deficiency in the evangelical graces of faith, repentance, humility, and patience. And also that we consider of our sins of commission, such as atheism, apostasy, blasphemy, perjury, rebellion, anger and malice, lust with its supporters, gluttony and drunkenness, oppression and cheating, lying and slandering, envy and covetousness, which are against the moral law, together with those against the gospel and its constitutions. And by so doing we shall avoid the hypocrisy of obscuring our particular sins under a slight and general confession, which can hardly be said with an *humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart*, unless we know the particulars, and have examined their number as well as pondered the heinousness of them. I may add, that of these two sorts the least is enough to condemn us; and yet there are degrees of guilt, those of commission being of a deeper dye; it is worse to do evil than to neglect that which is good, because in the first there is a real mischief; and yet it is easier to avoid a sin than to perform a duty, and that cannot be repaired as this may. Therefore sins of



omission are punished by withholding of blessings, those of commission by inflicting curses<sup>u</sup>. He that neglects to hear God's word shall become an ignorant secure sinner, and in a while be hardened; but the liar shall be punished by discovery, shame, poverty, and scorn. Which I do not remark as if sins of omission needed little, but because those of commission need much repentance; yet lest any should use it to excuse their leaving their duty undone, or doing it ill, let them know, that many times to omit what we ought to do, 31 is to do what we ought not. He that gives not alms is always covetous, often cruel, and sometimes a murderer<sup>x</sup>; he that repents not, hates God and loves sin, he is obstinate and presumptuous in that neglect. And further, he that wilfully omits a duty, or carelessly passes it over, shall shortly fall into a sin, because he useth not the means which God hath appointed to secure him; whereupon the church appoints sins of omission (though in their nature lesser) to be first confessed, because by these we forsake God, lie open to temptation, and fall into all actual and positive wickednesses. Let us not then neglect religious duties<sup>y</sup>, lest we shortly have greater offences to confess; and on the other side, think not you can put on the strict observance of duty, as a cloak for your wicked life, for if you live in sin, it is not religious offices can expiate your guilt; and though perhaps we may be constant in our public and private devotions, yet let us not scruple

<sup>u</sup> Excisionem animæ 23. vici-  
bus minatus est in negativis, et  
solum tribus in affirmativis, viz.  
non observanti circumcisionem,  
Gen. xvii. 14; pascham, Exod.  
xii. 15; sabbatum, Exod. xxxi.  
14. Fagius ex Aben Ezra,  
Transgressio præcepti affirmativi  
pœnitentia deletur, negativi tan-

tum pœnitentia suspenditur in  
diem expiationis. Dict. Rabbin.

<sup>x</sup> Qui succurrere perituro pot-  
est et non succurrit, occidit.

<sup>y</sup> Curre ad præceptum leve,  
ne forte (scil. ejus omissio) tra-  
dat te in manum majoris. R.  
Nathan. de Patr.

to make this confession; for if we consider the deadness of our affections, the unfixedness of our thoughts, the hardness of our hearts, and the sad mixtures of hypocrisy and pride, that cleave to us in all holy offices, we shall see we have left undone the best, the most acceptable and evangelical part of every duty; so that all truly good men do acknowledge God might justly reckon their ill performances for total omissions. Wherefore this part of the confession is needful for all, and will be useful to all, if said with these reflections.

§. VII. AND THERE IS NO HEALTH IN US] The sicknesses and diseases of the body are by the Holy Ghost used to represent the sinful distempers of the soul. Infectious sins are likened to the plague; filthy and odious iniquities, to leprosy; such as disquiet the conscience, to pains and wounds; heresy is the gangrene, 2 Tim. ii. 17, envy the consumption, Prov. xiv. 30, pride the tympany, Jude 16, of the mind, &c. Now the poor penitent having surveyed himself within and without, presents himself before the great Physician of souls, and acknowledgeth his want of health; he finds the head sick with evil devices, Isai. i. 5, 6, the heart faint with pursuing evil desires, and the whole body (from inward corrupt principles) overspread with Egyptian ulcers. So that if Jesus ask him to what part he shall apply his plaster, he will answer, not to his feet only, but to his hands and his head; nothing but a *panacea* can cure him. The head is heavy with ignorance, and dizzy with confused thoughts; the eyes bloodshot with wantonness, distorted with envy, and inflamed with covetous desires<sup>z</sup>; the ears are deaf to God's word, but itch after vanity and novelties; the tongue blistered with lies and slanders, kindled at the

<sup>z</sup> Τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν. 1 John ii. 16.

flames of hell<sup>a</sup>, streaming forth filthy or blasphemous evaporations; the heart is cloven with hypocrisy, decayed in the heat of zeal and charity; the hands are feeble, and soon weary of well-doing; the stomach is overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and nauseates all sober reproof; the knees are stiff with laziness and irreverence in God's worship; the feet often lame, and always trembling in the ways of holiness. This is the sad account of our infirmities and diseases, some of which are almost contrary to others, yet all agreeing in this, to hasten our death, if we hasten not to him who alone hath remedies for us. And when we are before him, we must not deny them for their multitude, nor conceal any for their loathsomeness; for this shame will make our cure impossible<sup>b</sup>, and is not to be indulged, unless we love our credit better than our eternal safety. But if any of these plagues are not yet broke out upon you, and you do thence conclude your soundness, I shall desire that you would first examine yourselves by these symptoms, which if you find, you may suspect either you are not in health, or will not long continue so. 1. Decay of the spiritual appetite, when the soul doth not hunger and thirst after righteousness, and *desire the sincere milk of the word*<sup>c</sup>. A healthy soul cannot be long without such nutriment, and in the want thereof is no more satisfied with worldly delights, than our craving bowels are with pleasant music; but to be indifferent whether we have it or no is a bad sign, and to nauseate it is a worse. 2. An ill digestion, when the word doth not enlighten us, nor

<sup>a</sup> James iii. 6.

<sup>b</sup> Plerosque tamen hoc opus ut publicationem sui, aut suffugere, aut de die in diem deferre, pudoris magis memores quam salutis, velut illi qui in

verecundioribus corporis partibus contracta vexatione, conscientiam medentium vitant, et ita cum erubescencia sua pereunt. Tertull. de Pœn. cap. 10.

<sup>c</sup> Matt. v. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 1.

sacraments engage us, nor prayers spiritualize us, nor reproof amend us; when mercies do not quicken our love, but increase our security; when afflictions do not <sup>32</sup> bring us to repentance, but fill us with discontent; when these divine things are putrified, and venom and corruption extracted from them, it is time to take heed, for a disease is not far off; which may be also gathered from, **3.** A general listlessness and disability in the members of our body and faculties of our souls for the discharge of their several parts in God's service; we may then fear a spiritual lethargy, although perhaps the tongue be active still, (Prov. xxvi. 14, and chap. xiii. 14,) and is exercised in speaking of religion; nay, though many seemingly passionate wishes be added, that we may always walk aright; yet if the hands hang down, and the knees and legs be feeble, if the work be still undone, this soul is in no athletic constitution. **4.** Consider if there be not a superfluity of humours, if the choler of passion, the phlegm of sloth, the melancholy of despair, or the sanguine of levity and voluptuousness do too much abound, we are in the borders of a disease. Are we not too hot with partiality and violent zeal, nor too cold with atheistical indifferency, too moist with discouraging griefs, nor too dry with unfruitful vanity? But it is to be feared a little examination will discover some, if not most of these symptoms in us all; and were there but half as much to portend a mortal sickness to our body, we should not stay for an adviser, but run to or presently send for the physician<sup>d</sup>. Let me but desire as much care here, where the distemper is in the nobler part, and the danger death eternal. If your soul be ill, your better half is dying, and if you love yourselves, make haste to Jesus for speedy help.

<sup>d</sup> — Venienti occurrere morbo. Sero medicina paratur, Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.

It may be the signs are not yet so evident or so formidable, but by being not regarded, it will gain strength and take root, and perhaps despise a cure at last. Aristides died of the bite of a little weasel, which he neglected till it became incurable, and then cried out in a desperate rage, *O me miserum*, &c. "Miserable wretch that I am! if it had been a lion, I had sought a remedy." Happy are they that dress their green wounds, and purge out their noxious humours betimes, so shall they not languish under a tedious sickness, nor be tormented with the pains of an irresistible gangrene. I have enlarged into this allegory, because it may improve our devotion; yet the literal and more direct sense may not be neglected here. Behold therefore the penitent (after the full view of his many and grievous sins) looking round about to find whether there be any way to escape or means of deliverance; but being disappointed, he humbly acknowledgeth there is no health, that is, as the word doth often signify in scripture, no salvation<sup>e</sup>, or means of help among the sons of men. We can destroy ourselves, but in God is our help, Hos. xiii. 9. In vain do we hope for salvation from great or small, Jerem. iii. 23. For no man can deliver himself nor his brother, Psalm xlix. 7. Salvation alone belongeth to the Lord, Psalm iii. 8. So that being compassed with so much guilt, and finding no help on earth, it becomes us in this fear with Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 12, to fly to heaven and say,

<sup>e</sup> Psalm cxlvi. 3.—In quibus non est salus. Vulg. Qui servandi facultatem non habent. Vatab. Salus et σωτηρία [ap. LXX.] Psal. cxxxii. 16. et alibi ambigue usurpantur pro *santitate* et *salute*, unde Psal. cxix. 155. in vet. trans. *health*; in nov. trans. *Salvation is far* &c. et per metonym. *salus* pro *mediis ad salutem necessariis*, unde Psal. xlii. ult. vet. trans. *help of my countenance*; nov. trans. *health of* &c.; ita hoc loco, *no health in us* ponitur pro *no help in us*. Ita D. Hammond.

We have no might, O God, against this great multitude of transgressions that is set in array against us, neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee, our only refuge and last hope, and unless we find health and help in thee, we must inevitably perish; for there is neither help nor health in us; we cannot deliver ourselves.

§. VIII. BUT THOU, O LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US MISERABLE OFFENDERS] When we have thus discovered our deplorable condition, we must not run away from God by the entertainment of despairing thoughts; for it is impossible to escape him<sup>f</sup>, and yet by attempting to fly from God, we run into the evils we fear, and hasten from him that alone can help us. Let us come therefore, but not saying with the Pharisee, *I thank thee*, Luke xviii. 11, but with the publican, *Lord be merciful*, as the church from his example hath taught us. Let us not ask any favours till we have first begged a removal of the evils which are upon us, viz. the guilt, the punishment, and the dominion of sin, which are here so contrived into three petitions, that every one is<sup>33</sup> joined with a motive to enforce it; so that our misery pleads for mercy, our free confession cries for a removal of the punishment, and our hearty reformation begs deliverance from all our contracted indispositions. The first thing in our view is, that we are *miserable sinners*; our misery is so plain we cannot overlook it, so great we cannot but feel it, and therefore we are taught to beseech our God to pity us, for misery is the proper object of mercy<sup>g</sup>. That benign attribute is ever looking upon the creature's present sufferings, without re-

<sup>f</sup> Non est quo fugias a Deo irato, nisi ad Deum placatum. August. in Psal. vii.

<sup>g</sup> Misericordia est alienæ mi-

seriæ quædam in nostro corde compassio, qua utique si possumus subvenire compellimur. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. 9. cap. 5.

flecting on the deserts of the sufferer; it is moved with the sight of a distressed person, whatever be the cause of his calamity. Therefore when nothing else in God can give any comfort to a poor sinking sinner, then he can lay hold of his mercy. The publican that dares not look up to heaven, can yet say *Miserere*. And as mercy is the sinner's chiefest comfort, so it is that attribute that moves God to forgive and pardon<sup>b</sup>, so that to beg for mercy and desire forgiveness are all one; as in that eminent penitential Psalm, David begins with *Have mercy on me*, and immediately explains it by the removing his offences. In like manner here we pray for pardon in our *Have mercy on us*, because Mercy is the almoner to distribute this principal act of Divine bounty, and grants out all pardons. It is not from any desert in us, but a mere compassion of our distress, and a pure act of free grace that disposeth God to take away sin, Isai. xliii. 25. We have no friend in the court of heaven to obtain it but Mercy, and no argument to plead for it but misery; if we come and say we have prayed, fasted, waited, Isai. lviii. 3, we seem to apply ourselves to God's justice. But he that, from a heart secretly groaning under the apprehensions of its distress, cries out for mercy because he is miserable, he shall pierce Mercy's ears, and cause her to open her compassionate eyes to see, and to stretch out her gracious hand to help; and if she be thy advocate, she will cause the bowels of the Almighty to yearn upon thee<sup>1</sup> with the same affection that the tender mother did, when she heard the cries of her poor sprawling infant under the merciless sword of the bloody executioner. But

<sup>b</sup> Rom. xi. 32; Heb. viii. 12; iii. 26. vel *involucra quibus fœtus in utero continetur*; at

<sup>1</sup> Jer. xxxi. 20. Heb. חַמּוּם saepe pro misericordia Dei. prop. sign. *viscera matris*, 1 Reg.

then you must be sure first to view your sin and danger well, that you may be fully convinced of your misery, and cry in a pungent sense thereof most earnestly, *Lord have mercy*; otherwise this will be a feigned cry, and an intolerable abuse of this sweet attribute; for what can provoke God more, than to call mercy forth, (which is ready enough to come,) and then through our impenitence, laziness, or not discerning the need of it, to send it back empty? Alas! such are more miserable, because they see not their misery<sup>k</sup>, and they are never like to be delivered from that misery, because by these feigned calls they have so often mocked God, and affronted this their only friend, that if at last they call in earnest, when death is before their eyes, mercy then will not come.

§. IX. SPARE THOU THEM, O GOD, THAT CONFESS THEIR FAULTS] The elder brother that knew the fidelity and constancy of his service expects a large reward; but the poor prodigal that was conscious of his offences, will esteem it a high favour to escape a severe chastisement, and utter exclusion from his father's house and presence; they that are not sensible of their guilt fear not punishment, and esteem a deliverance scarce worth the asking. But he that considers the multitude of his own offences, and God's abhorrency of them; he that remembers the terrors of his threatenings, the strictness of his justice, the fierceness of his anger when he begins, and the impossibility of avoiding that stroke which no place can avert<sup>l</sup>, no hands resist, no feet fly from, nor no strength endure; to this poor soul God's pity is desirable, and he accounts

<sup>k</sup> Nihil est miserius misero non miserante seipsum.

<sup>l</sup> Josh. viii. 20. Non erat [יָרָם] in eis manus ad pugnandum vel pedes ad fugiendum, RR. at

LXX. Vulg. et Masius, Non erat iis locus, ut Deut. ii. 37.

Ch. Par. Jun. et nostr. Vers. Non erant in eis vires. Ita Drusus.



it a great mercy he hath not yet found the weight of God's wrath, and begs earnestly he never may feel it, or however not sink eternally under it; he can pray as heartily before the stroke come, as others when the smart extorts it from them. When the Israelites heard the cry of Egypt, and saw the slaughter of so many first-born<sup>m</sup>, they then thought the sparing of their lives to be a mercy worthy the celebrating with a pass-over. The true penitent esteems his life a favour, and all on this side hell mercy, and the condemned male-  
 34 factor will be as thankful for a reprieve, as another for a great pension and high preferment. The poor sinner's request is no greater than to be spared, and his argument is not because he is not guilty, or deserves no stripes; that would accelerate the stroke, to abate such daring confidence, and convince such horrible falsehood. Nothing is to be gotten from God by standing on our innocence, but the way is to *confess our faults*; for one great end of God's temporal judgments on sinners is to force them to do him justice, by racks and tortures to extort a confession from them that have the cunning to conceal, or the impudence to deny their wickedness. Thus God opened the mouths of Joseph's brethren<sup>n</sup>, of Adonibezek<sup>o</sup>, and Manasseh<sup>p</sup>, and made them to display their former and almost forgotten cruelties; and thus he forced Pharaoh himself to cry *Peccavi*<sup>q</sup>, who hoped God would cease to punish, when he had obtained his end, and brought him to confession. Neither ought we to stay till some judgment summon us, but let us of our own accord ingenuously confess our sins. Racks and strapadoes are for obstinate rogues; no mer-

<sup>m</sup> Exod. xii. 13. Fagius in loc.

<sup>n</sup> Gen. xlii. 21, and xlv. 16.

<sup>o</sup> Judges i. 6.

<sup>p</sup> 2 Chron. xxxii. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Exod. ix. 27. Satis est, h. e. satis jam lucratus est Deus poenis suis, cum jam culpam nostram agnoscimus. Fagius in loc.

ciful humane prince would use them to one that with tears pleaded guilty and begged a pardon, much less will the Father of mercies; what need is there of any further witness<sup>r</sup>? The humble sinner accuseth himself, clears God's justice, and casts himself wholly on his mercy; and doubtless he shall be spared; especially because it is to be hoped that he that hath seen his danger, and so speedily and fully confessed his fault, designs never more to prove disobedient, if he may now be spared. And since the chief end of punishment is to prevent the sin<sup>s</sup>, doubtless God will not be hard to be entreated to spare him that is in the way to amendment, and whose own prudent fears have done that which otherwise a sharp judgment must have wrought. Let us then be so wise as to go in upon the first apprehensions of God's displeasure, and take sanctuary in his pity, and we shall not be punished temporally, unless with designs of mercy; however, not eternally.

§. X. RESTORE THOU THEM THAT ARE PENITENT] Though we are apt to account those beggars saucy and troublesome, who from one request granted are encouraged to make a second and more considerable; yet God (whose rule is "*Habenti dabitur, To him that hath shall be given*") is well pleased with it, nor will he interpret it impudence, if after we have prayed for a removal of the guilt, and a deliverance from the punishment of our sin, we put up a farther and greater request, even to be restored; for it is not a single mischief which sin doth us; besides the stain it leaveth, and the wrath it deserveth, it doth alienate the mind of God from us, and ours from him; so that after David had prayed against the forementioned evils, he also desires to be restored, Psalm li. 12. It will not suffice Absalom to be called home

<sup>r</sup> Matt. xxvi. 65. Habes confitentem reum.

<sup>s</sup> Nemo prudens punit quia peccatur, sed ne peccetur. Senec.

from banishment, unless he may see his father's face, 2 Sam. xiv. 32. So if a truly pious man were sure never to smart for sin by any positive evil, the bare privation of the Divine love would be intolerable, and its suspension a grievous burden; and he that truly calls God Father will not be satisfied without a restoring to his favour, which sin had deprived him of. The word *restore* is also used for the rebuilding a ruined and depopulated city, Dan. ix. 25, &c., which is the sad emblem of a soul laid waste by sin, which defaceth its beauty, dismantles its strengths, and brings down its highest and noblest faculties, fitting men for converse with low and base things, making a heap of a defenced city. Which when we consider to be our case, how can we but weep over our own soul, as Nehemiah over the ruins of Jerusalem, never ceasing to pray that by the Holy Spirit it may be reedified, and restored to its former beauty and strength. Either of these metaphors afford useful meditations; but it is most probable this petition refers to that clause of the confession, *there is no health in us*, and signifies our desires to be restored to health, according to God's promise, Jer. xxx. 17. It is not enough that we die not by sin, but we desire we may not lie languishing under the remains of so sad a disease, but may have a perfect cure. Some distempers so universally corrupt the humours, that the abatement is no recovery, for they make way for a worse, unless the body be well cleansed after them<sup>t</sup>.

35 So do many sins blind the mind, harden the heart, Heb. iii. 13, weaken the faith, undermine the hope, embase the affections, quench the actings of God's

<sup>t</sup> Ἰχνη τινὰ καὶ μώλωπες ἀπολείπονται ἐν αὐτῇ (i. e. in anima post peccatum) οὐς εἰ μὴ τις ἐξαστείῃ καλῶς, πάλιν κατὰ τῶν αὐτῶν μαστιγωθείς, οὐκέτι μώλωπας ἀλλ' ἔλκη ποιεῖ. Arr. in Epict. lib. 2. cap. 18.

Spirit, and give the tempter advantage against us; so that a bare pardon will not fit us either to serve or enjoy God, till the remaining ignorance, security, distrust, worldly-mindedness, and deadness be purged out, and we be fully restored. But nothing will move God to do this, unless you be sincerely penitent; that is, add to your sorrow and confession real purposes of amendment. He may pity the miserable, and may spare him that acknowledgeth his offence, but he will restore none but him that reforms; for he that sees the heart knows, that to seek only pity or deliverance proceeds from self-love at best, and sometimes from love to sin; as the crazy epicure desires health, that he may renew the prosecutions of his lust. But he that seriously desires to be restored, hates sin for itself, not for its evil company; and he that doth so is truly penitent; but they that only desire a freedom from misery and punishment, and are not grieved for these remains, will soon fall again into sin, and God, who knows that, may justly deny them the peace which they use so ill. By this also it appears, that men do in vain complain of the dregs of their old corruptions, who have not truly repented; for God will leave these Canaanites on purpose to vex such half repenters, which will hinder them in religious duties<sup>u</sup>; and when they grow weary of resisting them, then they become *snares in their way*, secretly to entrap them, and by degrees *scourges in their sides*, violently to drive them, and lastly *thorns in their eyes*, putting out the light of conscience itself, that they may sin without fear. O do not therefore cease repenting as soon as you can believe or hope a pardon; but let

<sup>u</sup> Numb. xxxiii. 55. Sæpe includent vos, et introitum et exitum negabunt vobis. Josh. xxiii. 13. Caute et tecte primo vos ir-

retire conabuntur, deinde palam urgebunt vos, donec occæcati estis. Masius.

that hope encourage you to repent more, and to cast out all the relics of the old leaven; watch and pray till you be restored to the same clearness of judgment, earnestness of holy desire, freedom of will, power over your affections, composedness of soul, and tenderness of conscience, which you had before you fell; for till then you are not out of the danger of your disease.

¶ XI. ACCORDING TO THY PROMISES DECLARED UNTO MANKIND IN CHRIST JESU OUR LORD] It might well be deemed an high presumption in us that are offenders against God, to ask so many favours of him, but that he hath prevented this censure by interposing his promise, that he will do what we desire; which promise is a sure foundation to build our hopes upon, because by it we have a title to that which we could not expect before; for God being truth itself, is obliged to make his word good, and by his promise gives his creature a kind of right to the thing promised<sup>x</sup>; or if he be not bound to us, he is obliged by his own justice and veracity<sup>y</sup>; but this doth not abridge his freedom, who could discern before all that could fall out, and yet freely obliged himself; so that his promise is no more than a declaration of what he can do, and sees fit to be done, if it had never been promised. Wherefore we cannot please him better than to urge him with his promises, because then we only desire what he judges fit to be granted; nor must we measure the Almighty by the scant measures of men, who love not to be charged with what they do not intend, or are not able to perform<sup>z</sup>; but there is no unforeseen accident can

<sup>x</sup> Gr. *ὑπόσχεσις*, promissio. *Ἀλλ' ἵσχει γὰρ πῶς καὶ κατέχει τὸν ὑποσχόμενον, ὁ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν δεξάμενος.* Eustath. *Iliad.* β.

<sup>y</sup> Deus non nobis fit simpliciter debitor, sed sibi ipsi. Tho.

Aquinas.

<sup>z</sup> Numb. xxiii. 10. Homo ex quatuor causis solet promissa negare, vel quando fallaciter quid promisit, vel quando promissi pœnitet, vel quando offenditur

occur to alter the determination of an all-seeing and immutable God, his servants have always pleased him and obtained their suit, 2 Chron. vi. chap. xx. 9, when they have pleaded a promise in a particular temporal concern: much more shall we in these which are of so great weight, and so often repeated in the book of God, and so fully agreeable to his eternal purposes and constant desires. These promises are indeed conditional, and we ask them not absolutely, but upon the condition on which they are made, viz. as hoping by God's grace that we are penitent, or else our request could not be *according to his promises*. But in these words are three grounds of our hopes. 1. Because the promises are *declared*; he hath not only purposes of mercy in the secrets of his unsearchable breast, but he hath made promises, and communicated and published them by word and writing, from time to time, before heaven and earth, angels and devils, and all men that are, or were, or ever shall be. Now if he had not intended to perform them, they should not have been divulged before so many witnesses; but since they are declared to all, they are a summons to all, and shall be fulfilled to 36 all that do go in to God, bringing his gracious proclamation in their hands. 2. They are made to *mankind*; for the apostate angels were permitted (as they fell, so) to lie to eternity, though in their naturals they far excelled us; but Jesus graciously snatched hold of us<sup>a</sup>, and made a covenant with us, so that though we are offenders, we are salvable; though despicable, yet we are such as the promises are directed to. We dare not pretend to any infallible revelation of our peculiar interest in them, nor do we plead any particular engage-

ab eo cui fit promissio, vel quando  
nequit persolvere; hæc omnia  
a Deo absunt. E. Fag. in loc.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. ii. 16. Gr. ἐπιλαμβάνει.  
verai. See D. Ham. Annot.

ments made to our persons by name; yet since they are made to all, we are thankful we are not particularly excepted, and do hope we shall have a share, for we believe mercy on purpose contrived the promises so large, that no repentant sinner might want encouragement; we apply them modestly to ourselves, not because we are better than others, but because we have as much need as any; and even when we see ourselves the chief of sinners, we may take comfort in the universality of the promise, because we are of mankind; but those who presume and grow arrogant with the conceit, that they have more right to them than any others, are like that vain person, who offered his prince a great sum of money, to be permitted to salute him familiarly every day, that men might suppose him a confidant of the king's. The better sort of humble Christians being thankful for lesser favours, which are also commonly more real, though less plausible. 3. We hope in these promises, because they are made *in Christ Jesus*, for he first clearly revealed them to us, 2 Tim. i. 10; he procured them of God, and sealed them as a Mediator between both, wherefore they are made in him, 2 Tim. i. 1. And because they are made in him, 1. we believe they shall be faithfully performed, they are *yea* and *amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20; that is, they were really intended, and shall be certainly fulfilled. Christ is the first, Gen. iii. 15, and great promise; and God having given him already, hath both evidenced his love to us, and manifested his reality in promising, and his resolution of performing all the rest in due time, Rom. viii. 32. And further, it is surer comfort that they are made in him, than if they had been made immediately to us; for so, whenever we had broke any condition, we had lost our title to all that was promised<sup>b</sup>;

<sup>b</sup> In pactis si vel tantillum ex dictis pars altera transgrederetur, rupta sunt fœdera. Thucyd.

but our venture is deposited in a safer bottom, even in him that fulfilled all that God required: Surely none can question those promises which were made freely by the God of truth, and are confirmed by the performance of the greatest first, and depend on the perfect obedience of Christ Jesus, whose complete righteousness shall justify the claim of every true penitent, notwithstanding his own many failings. 2. We believe, because they are made in him, they shall be dispensed to us with much mercy, not like those made upon Mount Sinai, which could only benefit him that had at all times and in all instances obeyed; for what comfort were that to him that owns himself a sinner? But these are from Mount Sion, and to be fulfilled by our gracious Redeemer, whose merits are the ground of our hope and faith. He that made them looked on Jesus, and through him with mercy on us, and we hope for his sake to receive our portion. This clause is the exercise of our faith, in pleading the promise through Christ, and could not have been omitted; for faith must ever regulate our repentance, as well as repentance must strengthen our faith<sup>c</sup>, and these two must not be separated. The desires of a pardon without this are but like the petitions men offer to merciless tyrants, rather to declare their grief, than in expectations of any help. To see sin, and not to see the promise, terrifies the conscience, and turns into the amazed flight of trembling Cain, or the final despair of wretched Judas, and produces nothing but hideous groans, such as are rebounded from the hollow caverns and infernal prisons of damned spirits. Wherefore I advise all that would repent, not to dwell so long in the dark meditations of their own vileness, as to be unable to endure the splendour of God's grace and mercy: for though a serious appre-

<sup>c</sup> Πίστεις οὐκ καὶ ἡ μετάνοιά ἐστιν κατόρθωμα. Clem. Alex.



hension of sin will make that bitter, yet nothing can make God sweet, but that faith which represents him willing to receive all those that humbly come to him.

37 §. XII. AND GRANT, O MOST MERCIFUL FATHER, FOR HIS SAKE] To be delivered from all the evil and mischievous consequences of sin hath been thus far the subject of our petition, which we now enlarge by the praying for somewhat which is really good; so that here again for our encouragement we call to mind, that our God is a most *merciful Father in Christ Jesus*, on whom the penitent is taught to look; and because he intercedes for us, we ask it for his sake through whom God is merciful, and we have a promise we shall prevail, John xiv. 13. If we asked these things for the sake of any saint or angel, we could have small hopes of success; for they are obliged to God for themselves, they depend upon him, and by him are what they are, and the saints have received all they have for Christ's sake; so that if they could hear us, (which is unlikely<sup>d</sup>) they would detest any derogation to the honour of that name to which they are so much indebted. But our Church both here, and in every prayer we make, enjoins us (as the scripture also doth, John xvi. 23, 26.) to ask all things in the name and for the alone sake of Jesus, thereby to confront that folly and impiety of many mediators so stiffly defended by the Roman church, not so much because they believe it, as because they gain by this Diana, Acts xix. 25. It is certain we must not come in our own names; for the very heathens thought it unreasonable to approach their gods without a mediator<sup>e</sup>; and hence the Platonists

<sup>d</sup> Isai. lxiii. 16; Job xiv. 22. Codurcus, *ibid*.

<sup>e</sup> Jani nomen cunctis precibus præponere soletis, viam enim

vobis pandere deorum ad audientiam creditis.—Arnob. in Gen. lib. 3.

feigned their numerous demons, who conveyed the notices of human affairs (especially prayers) to the superior deities. This multiplying mediators in the heathens may be a pardonable mistake; but it is inexcusable in Christians, who know it was never allowed by the Jews to use the intercession of any creature<sup>f</sup>, and that Daniel prayed then *for the Lord's sake*, Dan. ix. 17, and that there is but *one Mediator*, 1 Tim. ii. 5, and Jesus is he, 1 John ii. 1, 2. Nor is there one example (as themselves confess) of any in scripture that prayed by the mediation of saints or angels. The Jews were taught indeed in imitation of Daniel to use the name of Adonai<sup>g</sup> in their prayers, which they called *the key to Jehovah*, the storehouse to contain, and steward to dispense all blessings, the same which we affirm of Christ; but the Jews are scandalized to this day at the many mediators of the Romanist, and so would the primitive Christians have been also, who all declare against it, as might be largely proved; but that of Gregory Neocæs. may suffice<sup>h</sup>, “No man rightly calls upon God the Father, but by the Son.” I might add more for the confutation of this error, if it were not better and more seasonably done by others already, so that we may leave this, when we have observed the impudence of those ignorant and malicious persons, who charge the Liturgy as savouring of popery, when every little Collect doth disown and declare against one foundation article of their faith, nay, by consequence against all that are superstructed, viz. merits, pilgrimages, shrines, images, indulgences, penances of satisfaction, &c.; because we

<sup>f</sup> Munster in Matt. iv. 10.

<sup>g</sup> Adonai est clavis qua patefit aditus ad Jehovam in sua essentia quasi latentem, est The-saurus quo ea quæ in v' condita sunt nobis impertiantur, est OE-

conomus qui omnia dispensat, &c. Port. Lucis.

<sup>h</sup> Qui recte Deum invocatur per Filium invocatur.—Greg. Neocæs. in *Exhortat.*

adhere only to the merits of Christ Jesus, acknowledging our own unworthiness, but believing that he, as our Redeemer, will procure our pardon, and as our Advocate will obtain grace to help us to walk in the ways of God.

§. XIII. THAT WE MAY HEREAFTER] The very method of this exact confession directs us in our repentance to look three ways successively: 1. inwards, for humiliation; 2. upwards, for pardon; and 3, onwards, for amendment. Which order we must not break, nor disjoin the connection; for he that first looks up to God, before he hath seen his sin, will but mock the Almighty; he that first looks forward will but deceive himself, and not be able to proceed. Again, he that looks inwards and not upwards will despair; he that looks upwards and not inwards will presume; and if he do both see his sin and seek for mercy, but looks not onwards to amend, he doth but dissemble; and of all the rest we must be careful of what we are to do hereafter, because the discovery of sin and the offer of forgiveness are only to engage to a future reformation. Which consideration respects two sorts of persons who are apt to neglect this principal part of true repentance: 1. the dejected penitent, who is so taken up with the sight and oppressed with the sense of his sins that  
 38 he cannot look forward, and spends all that precious time which is allowed for amendment, in sadly poring on what is done, so that he finds no leisure to consider what should be done. The church bespeaks these as once God did Joshua, chap. vii. 10, *Arise, why liest thou here on thy face?* Job vii. 20. Your sorrow cannot undo what is done, you have seen your own ways, now turn unto God's, Psalm cxix. 59. Set your sins before you, to keep you humble, Psalm li. 3; but not to weaken your hands from doing God's will, Lam. iii. 40.

When this sorrow hath made you hate sin, and long for peace with God, it hath proceeded far enough, and to continue this corroding plaster is to protract and hinder the cure. Experience tells us, that many good men suffer for want of this advice, who fearing they should grieve too little, study to increase their sorrow by ever beholding the dark side of the cloud, which fills their hearts with benumbing fears, their heads with unworthy jealousies, and all their duties with distrust and unbelief. Whereas if they would set themselves to work, and oiling their wheels with love and hope, leave their desires of pardon to Jesus to sue out, they might find more convincing proofs of the Divine mercy in his assistance of their endeavours, than ever they shall gain by fruitless sighs and tears, sad wishes and empty speculations. 2. This concerns the dissembling hypocrite, who also looks not forward, not because he fears he cannot, (as the former,) but because he resolves he will not amend his life; only finding his conscience terrified and uneasy, he would say or promise any thing to be quit of the present smart; but this proceeds rather from a fear of suffering for evil than a hatred against doing it. And such men's cries for mercy are only to stop the mouth of their accuser, without any resolutions of becoming better if they procure their quiet; nay, perhaps they do it in hopes to sin hereafter with less opposition. But the miserable wretches deceive and tire themselves in an endless circle of sinning and repenting, striving for a little false peace, that they may do that which will renew their trouble, and then they repent again, (as they call it,) though indeed they never repent, because they never amend<sup>i</sup>, and in this are

<sup>i</sup> Αἱ δὲ συνεχεῖς καὶ ἐπάλληλοι τῷ συναισθήσεσθαι ὅτι ἁμαρτάνουσι. μετάνοιαι οὐδὲν τῶν καθάπαξ μὴ Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. πεπιστευκότων διαφέρουσιν, ἢ μόνῳ

worse than the most blind and obdurate sinner, because they see they have done amiss, and yet will do it again. O let such consider this *hereafter*, and know, till they both desire and endeavour a change in their manners, they cannot be forgiven.

§. XIV. LIVE A GODLY, RIGHTEOUS, AND A SOBER LIFE] The Jews call that place, Mic. vi. 8, the law in three words, *justice, mercy, and humility*, and St. Paul hath given us both Law and Gospel in as few, Tit. ii. 12<sup>k</sup>, from whence this petition is taken; for the principal end of Christ's coming, of the preaching of the gospel, and of the communications of God's grace, he there shews to be, that we may live, 1. *godlily*, in observance of all duties of piety to God; 2. *righteously*, in discharging all offices of justice and charity to others; 3. *soberly*, in performing what relates to our own bodies and souls; which is the whole duty of man. And surely, he that confesseth he hath offended in all, and desires forgiveness of all, must needs pray for the amendment of all that hath been amiss, or his repentance cannot be sincere. The true penitent takes not out such duties as comply with his interest, and omits the rest, nor craves allowance in those sins that agree with his constitution and design, and forbears the rest; but forsakes all iniquity as displeasing to God, and as that which Jesus smarted for, and which will deprive him of grace and glory. Those therefore that would excuse their injustice and uncharitableness to others, or their own voluptuousness by a strict devotion, have never truly repented, nor those who wish there were no more required than outward justice, that they might take liberty in other matters. God allows none of these commutations, nor this church neither, which orders us to pray for piety, justice, and sobriety all together.

<sup>k</sup> "ἵνα σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν.

Some of them perhaps may please us better, but they all alike and only together please God. If we seek our own ease, we choose what we like best; but if we truly love God, we must embrace all; for they all depend on one another; and he that breaks or leaves one link loose, weakens as well as shortens the whole chain. But let us view the particulars. 1. *A godly life*, which may challenge the first place, in regard the observations of piety are the foundation of justice and sobriety, and 89 the neglect of these opens the door to all manner of wickedness<sup>1</sup>. How should he that is a rebel to his prince be just to his fellow-subjects? The first then is the fear of God, or a godly life; and it is the giving God his due inwardly and outwardly. 1. Inwardly, in that complete precept of loving him before all, above all, and more than all things, in giving him the chiefest place in our thoughts, in our will, understandings and desires; so that we admire nothing more than his wisdom, fear nothing more than his threatenings, and design nothing more than his glory<sup>m</sup>. This is that loving God with our whole heart, when we confide in his truth, hope in his mercy, rest on his omnipotence, and wait for his bounty; and if our hearts be thus disposed, it will appear, 2. in outward significations, viz. endeavours to know him, speaking honourably of him, in a readiness to praise him, to pray to him, and worship him on all opportunities public and private. This is the sum of the first table of the Law, wherein we are commanded to love and own, honour and fear God, exclusively to all others: to worship him devoutly, to reverence his name, and all that bears the impresses of

<sup>1</sup> Heu primæ scelerum causæ mortalibus ægris Naturam nescire Dei.—Sil. Ital. Sublata pietate tollitur justitia. Cicero.

<sup>m</sup> Deut. vi. 5; Matt. xxii. 37.

Toto corde ut omnes cogitationes, tota anima ut omnem vitam, tota mente ut omnem intellectum in Deum conferas.—Aug. de Doctr. Christi.

it, and to observe religiously those solemn times dedicated to his service, which is called *walking with God*<sup>n</sup>, and worthy of him<sup>o</sup>; and such a godly life is suitable to those confessions we make of his wisdom, power, and mercy, and doth express we are really grieved for walking in contrary paths. 2. *A righteous life*, which is more than a negative can express, and is by some falsely confined to the doing no evil to our neighbours. The heathens said<sup>p</sup>, *Do not to others what you would not have done to you*. But Christ changeth it into the positive<sup>q</sup>, and the Christians, besides avoiding all wrongs and injuries, did that to others which they would have wished done to themselves; and therefore the sum of this is, We pray that we may never do that to our neighbours which we would be loath to suffer; as hurting his body, impairing his estate by force or fraud, disparaging his name at the first or second hand; and further, whatever we would wish should be done unto us, if we were abused or oppressed, sick or sorrowful, in danger or necessity, we pray that we may do the same to them that are in such circumstances<sup>r</sup>; and as we expect loving relatives, chaste yoke-fellows, obedient children, faithful friends, and loving neighbours, that we may be such in all these relations. In a word, that we may benefit all and hurt none<sup>s</sup>, but be a common good to those we converse with; and this will be most pleasing to that God who is the common Father

<sup>n</sup> Gen. v. 22. C. P. Ambulavit in timore coram Domino.

<sup>o</sup> 1 Thess. ii. 12. Ἀξίως τοῦ Θεοῦ.

<sup>p</sup> Justitia in eo sita est, ut abstineatur alienis, neque noceatur non nocenti. Ita Porphy. Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris.

<sup>q</sup> Matt. vii. 12. Ideo mihi

placent Christiani, quod quæ sibi fieri velint, ipsi aliis faciunt. Severus imperat.

<sup>r</sup> Τὸ γὰρ χρῆσθαι πάσαις ἀπειαῖς πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον τῶν πέλας, τοῦτό ἐστιν ἡ δικαιοσύνη. Andron. Rhod. Arist. lib. 5. cap. 1.

<sup>s</sup> Vir bonus prodest quibus potest, nocet autem nemini. Cicero.

of all, and the Judge of all the world. 3. *A sober life*, which contains all that prudent care a man ought to take of his own body and soul, in observance to him that created, redeemed, and preserves both; for though in common speech sobriety be opposed to drunkenness, the word *σωφροσύνη* is of larger signification, importing a prudent moderation of our natural desires of meat or drink, ease or pleasure, that the mind be not by them hindered in the pursuing of what is truly good. So that every man who is no drunkard is not a sober person, for neither the gluttonous epicure nor lascivious wanton do live sober lives. The full sense of this request is, That we may be temperate and abstemious, modest and chaste, full of mortification and self-denial; that we may use meat and drink to serve our natural needs, and fit us for God's service; not to pamper us for the Devil's saddle, not to indispose our mind, weaken our body, or shorten our lives; that we may use none but lawful pleasures, and those so moderately, that they may not make our spirits vain, engage our affections, engross our thoughts, nor be esteemed as our chiefest good<sup>t</sup>; and if God grant us this command over our appetites, we shall never neglect our watch, nor give our enemies advantage, nor shall we at any time be unapt for our duties to God or man. This is a brief account of this most comprehensive petition, every part of which sure we shall put up heartily, when we have seen our ingratitude to God, our injustice to our neighbour, and our carelessness of ourselves, together with the vengeance we deserve for all this. Now, if ever, it will appear high time to leave those evil and dangerous ways, and to return into these pleasant and safe paths for our everlasting good; and that we may heartily ask this, we must first get a firm resolution to set about these

<sup>t</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 29. *Uti non frui.* Aug.



duties, lest we mock God; and secondly, we must see our own insufficiency, lest we deceive ourselves by thinking we need not the assistance of Divine grace.

40 If we purpose firmly, we do our endeavour, but if we beg the assistance of God's Spirit, we declare our humility, and are like to stand fast in those resolutions; and this we may assure ourselves, that it is his desire as well as ours that we should live such lives. He hath long waited to hear this petition from us, so that when we ask it heartily he will be sure to grant it, and rejoice over us, in that he is likely to reap the fruit of all that Jesus hath done for us.

§. XV. TO THE GLORY OF THY HOLY NAME] This conclusion may either have respect to all the petitions before, or it may particularly be applied to the last. In the first sense it is a declaration, that (though we shall be happy in having all these prayers heard, yet) we are not so devoted to our own advantage, as to aim no higher; but we believe it will tend to his glory as well as our good. Nothing by us can be added to make his perfections more glorious in themselves; but by such incomparable testimonies of grace and mercy, his goodness will be more clearly manifested to us and all men; for we consider that his delivering us from death to life, retrieving us from fears of hell to hopes of heaven, his changing us from sin to grace, and doing all this for rebellious wretches that he could easily destroy; this will be a great manifesto of his glory to all the world, for all that see will admire<sup>u</sup>, and be encouraged to repent and turn to this most merciful God, and we ourselves shall ever remember with joy and delight, that we have found in him a generous propensity to

<sup>u</sup> 1 Tim. i. 16. Gr. Ἐνδεῖξται populi ejus. R. Jehud. lib. 1. *ra.* Gloria ejus est scintilla Cosri.  
lucis divinæ cedens in utilitatem

pity the miserable, unspeakable kindness to help the unworthy, and omnipotent power to rescue the perishing from the jaws of eternal ruin; and with these holy thoughts, the flames of gratitude will ever be preserved upon the altar of our hearts, and from thence daily will ascend a cloud of hearty praises and gratulations. Or secondly, it may be annexed to the last petition, viz. that we may not only do good, but do it well, having an eye to his glory, Rom. xiv. 5, 6, not our own estimation, or to obtain the praise of men; that we may *live godlily, righteously, and soberly*, not to our own credit, but his glory; and when we have done all, may in gratitude cast all at his feet, to let all the world see, by whose long-suffering we are spared, by whose mercy we are forgiven, and by whose grace we are reformed; and that our holy lives hereafter may shew, that we are so in love with God and his ways, that we esteem it our chiefest happiness to be like him, and walk in them all our days.

§. XVI. AMEN] There is in the Liturgy as well as holy scripture a twofold Amen, the one affirmative in the end of the Creed, the other optative in the end of Collects, and particularly of this confession; so that here it is an adverb of wishing<sup>x</sup>, a serious desire that God would grant all our petitions. Thus the Jews used it at the end of their hymns<sup>y</sup> and prayers<sup>z</sup>, and in that cvith Psalm the people are particularly charged, when they had heard that Psalm read, to say Amen after it. The rabbins<sup>a</sup> enjoined the saying it after

<sup>x</sup> Futur. Niph. אמן per aphæres. אמן unde LXX. γένοιτο. Vide Full. Miscel. lib. 1. cap. 2.

<sup>y</sup> 1 Chron. xii. 36.

<sup>z</sup> Ea voce testati sunt omnes se probare ea quæ recitantur. Grotius.

<sup>a</sup> Quicunque finitis singulis precatiunculis dicit Amen in hoc seculo, dicet etiam Amen in seculo futuro. R. Jehud. Tanch. Ille facit ut redemptio nostra acceleretur. Alter RR.

every little prayer, as a thing pleasing to God and profitable to men; comparing it to the setting our name to an epistle writ in another's hand, which then becomes ours when we sign it<sup>b</sup>. The same doctors in the Talmud also reprove three sorts of Amen: 1. *Pupillum*, when like children they speak it to that they understand not. Amen *surreptitium*, when by carelessness they say it before the prayer be done. 3. Amen *sectile*, when by sleepiness and yawning they cut it in two parts. By all which it appears they would have it pronounced zealously and reverently by all the people. From the Jews our Lord took it, and by placing it at the end of his own prayer, Matt. vi. 13, declared he would have us Christians to subjoin it to all ours; and it appears in the apostles' time the most ignorant (who could only join with others that prayed for him) were appointed at the end to say Amen<sup>c</sup>. Which we may the rather believe they ordained in the church, because we find the masters of Israel appointed those who could not pray for themselves nor read, to go to the synagogue<sup>d</sup>, and hear what others then prayed, and by saying Amen heartily to their prayers, they made those prayers to become their own. From the practice of the apostles, 41 it descended into the constant use of the church in all ages<sup>e</sup>; for the people in the primitive times used in the conclusion of all public prayers to answer with an Amen loud, as a clap of thunder. And I wish our times (which pretend to so much zeal) had never laid aside this holy custom, which besides the prescription

<sup>b</sup> Buxt. Synag. Jud. cap. 7.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 16. Gr. *ἰδιῶτα*.

<sup>d</sup> Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. 5.

<sup>e</sup> Nos simul Amen dicimus. Irenæus. Si pro ipsius Salvatoris pacto in consensu duorum quodcunque petierint, fiet, quid

igitur futurum ubi ex tot tantisque populis in unum congregatis, una vox respondeatur acclamantium Amen? Athan. Ad similitudinem cœlestis tonitruī Amen populus reboat. Hieron.

of antiquity, hath the records of scripture to produce for its observation. I wish I might be a happy instrument to restore the use of it. Let us, I beseech you, reassume this most useful conclusion, and all speak it heartily and audibly, to testify both to God and men that we have all one Lord, one faith, one hope, and one mouth. And as we pronounce it, let us reflect on all the sentences of the foregoing prayer, (especially such as vain thoughts hindered us from attending,) and sum up all our desires in one devout Amen. Lord, let all and every of these things be granted to us. If you forbear to say Amen out of dislike to the prayers, do but study them, and I am confident you will be reconciled to them. If you omit Amen out of negligence, pray consider how you can expect God should accept that prayer which you never owned nor consented to. You might as well be absent, if you join not with the minister. And therefore that God may say Amen to all our prayers, he grant us grace to say it devoutly unto our own. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Confession.*

O most glorious and dreadful Lord God, who art ALMIGHTY in thy power, and of absolute authority, able to destroy us, and yet willing to spare us, and thereby hast shewed thyself a gracious AND MOST MERCIFUL FATHER, thy pity encourageth us to confess unto thee with shame and sorrow; that WE, thy poor creatures, HAVE ERRED, and daily gone aside out of thy right paths, by frequent, sudden, and unobserved sins, AND STRAYED many times into voluntary, deliberate, and habitual transgressions; whereby we have stayed longer and wandered further FROM THY WAYS of pleasantness and paths of peace, where we might have been so safe and happy. And now we are LIKE LOST SHEEP, without our good Shepherd, exposed to many secret, subtle, and powerful enemies, unable of ourselves to resist them or fly from them, and unlikely ever to return to thee, unless thou come to seek and save us. O Lord, we now

find to our sorrow, that WE HAVE FOLLOWED TOO MUCH and too long after false guides, even THE DEVICES and false principles of our corrupted understandings; yea, we have been led headlong after our mistaken choice, by the blind affections AND DESIRES OF OUR OWN HEARTS; and thus by forsaking thy conduct, and pursuing all that a mistaken judgment could devise, or a wicked heart desire, WE HAVE daily in thought, word, and deed, most grievously OFFENDED AGAINST THY HOLY LAWS, though we were not ignorant of them, nor can we make any exceptions against them. Who shall plead for us, that have been fully instructed in our duty, and yet through laziness, forgetfulness, or worldly-mindedness, we have very often LEFT UNDONE THOSE THINGS which our duty to God, our love to our neighbours, and the care of our own bodies and souls required<sup>f</sup>? All WHICH WE OUGHT TO HAVE DONE in the most sincere and cordial manner; but these we have either omitted, or else performed so slightly, that they might almost as well have been left undone; by which omission thou hast been provoked to give us up to the deceits of Satan: so that WE HAVE frequently DONE THOSE THINGS also which have tended to thy dishonour, our neighbour's hurt, and to the prejudice of our own bodies and souls<sup>g</sup>, the least of WHICH WE OUGHT NOT TO HAVE DONE to have gained the whole world. O thou Physician of souls, our heads are full of evil devices, our hearts of base desires, our lives are overspread with the loathsome sores of actual transgressions, AND THERE IS NO HEALTH IN US, nor power to help or save ourselves out of this misery. It is true, we have wilfully brought ourselves into this estate, BUT THOU, O LORD, who seest our distress, HAVE MERCY UPON US; let thy bowels yearn upon so wretched a spectacle, and forgive that horrid guilt that doth amaze us; for though we deserve no pity, yet thou knowest we are MISERABLE OFFENDERS, like to be eternally condemned by thy justice, if thou dost not pardon us, and certain to perish under thy ven-

<sup>f</sup> Here reflect upon what you read §. 6, and 14, calling to mind what you have omitted of your duty to God, yourselves, or others.

<sup>g</sup> Here remember your sins of

commission, (as hath been said,) and call to mind your breaches of the second, third, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments.

geance, whensoever thou beginnest to punish us. But for thy 42  
pity and compassion's sake SPARE THOU THEM, O GOD, THAT  
(knowing they have deserved thy wrath, and fearing before it  
comes) do of their own accord CONFESS THEIR FAULTS, in  
hopes to find mercy and a deliverance, if not from temporal  
judgments, however from eternal. Although, O Lord our  
God, when thou hast removed thy judgments, unless thou also  
take away the security and presumption that our sins leave  
behind, we shall want thy favour still, which is our only happi-  
ness; therefore we further pray, RESTORE THOU that health  
and peace, freedom and strength, we had before we did offend;  
for we now relent, and are of the number of THEM THAT ARE  
PENITENT, and resolve, if thou wilt cleanse us from the dregs  
of these corruptions, never to do the like again. We confess  
we have no merit to deserve these things, and so no ground in  
ourselves to expect them; but we hope thou wilt grant us all  
these requests, O thou God of truth, because they are ACCORD-  
ING TO THY PROMISES which thou madest so freely, and re-  
solvest so fully to perform. O Lord, thou hast openly DE-  
CLARED, and proclaimed these thy gracious intentions UNTO  
MANKIND, on purpose that such poor sinners as we (who are  
not excepted) might not despair, but lay hold on those com-  
fortable promises which are made IN CHRIST JESU OUR LORD,  
who purchased this favour for us, and in whom thou art recon-  
ciled to us; so that we not only hope for a pardon, but  
mindful of his intercession, we beseech thee further to give us  
thy Holy Spirit. AND GRANT, O MOST MERCIFUL FATHER,  
FOR HIS SAKE who is now pleading in heaven for us, THAT WE  
who have earnest desires and unfeigned purposes to amend,  
though we cannot satisfy for the time past, MAY HEREAFTER  
give all diligence to LIVE A GODLY and religious life, in ob-  
servance of all our duties to thee; that we may love and fear  
thee, honour and adore thee, believe in thee, and rely upon  
thee, long for thee, and delight in thee above all the world,  
daily seeking to know thee, praying for thy help, praising  
thee for thy mercies, and waiting in hopes of the eternal en-  
joyment of thee; that by serving thee we may be enabled also  
to lead a RIGHTEOUS life in all justice and honesty, love and  
charity to our neighbours, hurting no man in thought, word,

or deed, but ready to relieve and help all to our power, doing ever unto others what we would have done to ourselves. And lastly, grant that by thy Divine aid we may live a temperate, a chaste, AND A SOBER LIFE, mortifying our lusts, moderating our desires, and restraining our appetites, so that we may avoid all carnal delights that would cloud our reason, engross our thoughts, pollute our bodies and souls, or unfit us for thy service; which, if thou shalt please to do for us, thy mercy in forgiving our grievous sins, thy pity in delivering us from apparent ruin, and thy grace in strengthening us to live a reformed life, will not only be our advantage, but turn to THE GLORY OF THY HOLY NAME, which shall be praised by us and all the world for these incomparable testimonies of thy unspeakable lovingkindness to us poor sinners, both now and evermore. And in token of our earnest desire of all this, we unfeignedly sign it by heartily saying AMEN, Lord grant it may be so.

## SECTION IV.

## OF THE ABSOLUTION.

§. I. *Of Absolution in general.*

SIN doth abridge the soul of its free converse with God, binding it down by its terrors, and holding the wicked fast in its chains unto the judgment of the great day, wherefore it is compared to a bond<sup>h</sup>, and sinners are said to be holden in its cords, Prov. v. 22; but since Christ came to loose these bonds, Isai. lxvi. 1, they are now prisoners of hope, Zach. ix. 12, because Jesus hath the keys of death and hell, and he can loose whom he pleaseth, by forgiving, that is, absolving and unloosing those bonds. But because he is now invisible, and employed in heaven to intercede for us, before his departure he appointed his apostles to supply

<sup>h</sup> Acts viii. 23. Græc. σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας.

this place, giving them commission, Matt. xvi. 19, and xviii. 18; John xx. 22, 23, by a visible and external application of this power, to support the spirits of all true penitents, till himself should come to ratify their absolution; upon which ground the bishops and priests of the whole Christian church have ever used to absolve all that truly repented, and at this day it is retained in our church as a part of the daily office; which being so useful, so necessary, and founded on holy scripture, needs not any arguments to defend it, but that the ignorance and prejudice of some makes them take offence at it, and principally because it hath been so much abused by the papal church. So that it may perhaps help the devotion of many, if we discover the true meaning of absolution, and the mistakes of our adversaries on both sides, as well those who make it nothing, as those who urge it *instar omnium*; those who would rob us of it, as those who would ensnare us by it. 1. The true judgment of the church of England concerning absolution may best be gathered from the Liturgy, in which are three forms of absolving set down. The first *declaratory* here, which is a solemn promulgation of pardon by a commissioned person, repeated every day when the whole congregation confess their sins, wherein they are assured of forgiveness if they repent and believe; and this is fitted for a mixed company of good and bad men, where many hypocrites feign repentance; but this absolution gives no encouragement to such, only it assures all that there is a pardon, and shews on what terms it may be had; so that to those who truly do repent, it is present remission, to those that do not, it is a monitor that they may repent; it comforts the godly, and allows not the wicked to presume, no, nor yet to despair. And this being pronounced to all the



people, every one is to take his portion. The second form is *petitionary* in the communion service, where the minister lays down the promise, and on that ground, by virtue of his own office, begs of God to make that promise good; and this is more than the prayer of another person; because the minister, who is sent to assure men of pardon, upon their faith and repentance, when he sees such lively signs of both, (as most shew at the Lord's table,) may with authority and confidence request Almighty God to forgive them, who in all likelihood are come up to his own terms. As a captain when a besieged town hath yielded upon the articles sent by the general, may confidently require him to seal them. So that holy matron came to St. Basil, and desired from him *remission of her sins*, and when he answered, "God alone could forgive," she answered, "I know that, and therefore I desire the prayers of you his officer may be presented to him for me." And we read in God's word of this *petitionary* absolution, Acts viii. 24, James v. 15, which is something more than the former, because at the holy sacrament our sight of sin is clearer, our sense quicker, and our fear greater; so that then we need more comfort than to be told barely there is a pardon, and are fit to receive more, because there we shew more signs of repentance. The third is *judiciary* in the Office for the 44 sick, wherein the priest having declared there is a pardon, and prayed for the sick person, doth by God's authority, and as his substitute<sup>1</sup>, declare him (whom he believes truly penitent) loosed from the guilt of his sins by Christ's merit. But this so high and solemn office is not by our church prescribed to be performed, but only to a weak or dying man, nor to him, but upon his

<sup>1</sup> Quantum in se est, sacramentum reconciliationis homini impendit.

heartly confession, and being full of fear and sorrow; and when he shall desire to hear his pardon from the priest's mouth, before he go to God's tribunal. In such case, out of pity to this dejected soul, and to fortify him against the agonies of death, (upon evidences of his true repentance,) this absolution may be given. If the priest be deceived<sup>k</sup>, the man is no worse; if he be not deceived, he is the better by having the comfort of his pardon antedated in his need. Now by all this it appears that our church neither refuses to give absolution, after the solemnest manner in some cases, (as some among us have fancied,) nor yet applies that form to every confession, as the Romanists generally do, who scarce ever use the two first sorts of absolution. To this brief account we shall add these considerations: 1. Those who think the priest ought not to absolve any persons are grossly mistaken; for why then did Christ repeat this commission so often? Are all those lines wholly insignificant<sup>l</sup>? They must take them so to be who fancy this but a personal privilege, dying with the apostles. The primitive church did not so understand them, for it is easy to prove that absolution was used frequently in the three first centuries; and therefore why may not we use it now, since penitent sinners need comfort now as well as any did then, and why should the remedy cease while the disease remains? Christ gave the power of these keys to all the apostles and their successors; and St. Peter absolved the penitent Jews<sup>m</sup>, St. Paul the submissive Corinthians<sup>n</sup>, and St. John applies it to all ministers<sup>o</sup>; and why should any be offended at our exercise of it upon a

<sup>k</sup> Deus non semper sequitur  
judicium ecclesiæ, quæ per sur-  
reptionem et ignorantiam in-  
terdum judicat. Pet. Lom. Sent.  
lib. 4.

<sup>l</sup> Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23.

<sup>m</sup> Acts ii. 38.

<sup>n</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 10. Ἐν προσώπῳ  
Χριστοῦ.

<sup>o</sup> 1 John v. 16.

weighty occasion? If it be objected, Luke v. 18, that *God alone can forgive*, we grant it, that none but God can absolve in his own right; but it is certain, that this power may be communicated to an angel, Exod. xxiii. 20, 21, or to men, for the apostles were men (though holy men) and they had it; God reconciles, but *unto us* (saith St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 18,) *is committed the administration of it*. He the Lord, we the stewards of these mysteries; nor does this invade God's prerogative, any more than it would impair the king's privilege (of pardoning condemned malefactors) if one of his attendants shall, by royal appointment, deliver the pardon sealed to him that must have the benefit of it. It is therefore no absurdity to say, God pardoneth<sup>p</sup>, when the minister absolveth according to the evangelical conditions of pardon, and if any be not forgiven upon it by God, it is not for want of right in the priest, but for want of penitence in the party; and no doubt in such case, if the minister judgeth to the best of his skill, he doth his duty. Though where faith and repentance is wanting, God himself will not forgive; nay, where men grow worse, he revokes his own purposes of mercy, as well as the minister's sentence; but we may suppose he will the sooner forgive, when his commissioned servant hath piously and prudently proceeded so far. But, 2, we do lament to behold this sacred privilege abused by the Roman church to serve the ends of pride, avarice, and carnal policy. And first, we disallow that arrogance of fixing this power to St. Peter's chair, or those authorized by it; because we know all the apostles had as much right to absolve as St. Peter, John xx. 22, 23, and from them it descended (say we) to God's ministers, not only to (him that calls himself) Christ's

<sup>p</sup> Deus quoque peccata dimittit per eos quibus dimittendi tribuit potestatem. Ambr. in Luc.

vicar. Secondly, we detest that accursed simony which they use, to sell pardons, prostituting the top jewel of the priestly mitre for filthy lucre; and not only so, but by this means they cherish vice, fill the world with atheism and profaneness<sup>q</sup>, disgrace religion, and ruin many souls who rely upon such broken reeds, I mean, bought pardons. Thirdly, we disclaim that Machiavelian policy of making absolution an art to advance the priests in estimation with the common people, and to give them opportunity to pry into the secrets of princes; for under pretence of exercising a spiritual office they aim at temporal things, and to these ends they enjoin auricular confession, and place the priest in God's throne<sup>r</sup>, as the Audian heretics of old and Donatus's disciples<sup>s</sup> did; contrary to the ancient church of 45 Christ<sup>t</sup>, nay, to their own opinions<sup>u</sup> and practices<sup>x</sup> in former times, and therefore we may and must declare our abhorrency of these evil uses of absolution; though in that sober, moderate, and useful manner we do perform it, we do not vary from the prime intention of Christ's commission, and the practice of antiquity; absolution was instituted by Jesus, and if it have been corrupted by men, we will cast away the corruptions, not the ordinance itself.

<sup>q</sup> Crescit enim ibi multitudo peccantium cum redimendi peccati spes datur, et facile itur ad culpas, ubi venalis est ignorantiae gratia. Arnob. lib. 7.

<sup>r</sup> Sacerdos est iudex condemnare vel salvare. Bellarm. de Pœn. lib. 3. cap. 2. Attritio virtute clavium fit contritio. Cor. Gl. ad Dist. 1. de Pœn. Negatur remissio iis quibus noluerunt sacerdotes remittere. Bellarm. sup.

<sup>s</sup> Optat. Milev. in Parmen. lib. 5.

<sup>t</sup> Homines autem in remissione peccatorum ministerium suum exhibent, non jus alicujus potestatis exercent. Ambros. de Spir. Sanc. lib. 3. cap. 19.

<sup>u</sup> Vid. Biel. in 4. dist. 14. quæst. 2.

<sup>x</sup> — Secundum quod potestas mihi tradita se extendit—et quantum debeo et possum. In vet. form. indulg. P. Martin.

§. II. *The Analysis or Division of the Absolution.*

The absolution contains these three things,	1. The commission, in which is shewed,	1. From whom it comes, viz. from	That God who is	1. able, . . .	<i>Almighty God,</i>
		2. On what occasion, . . . .		2. willing,	<i>The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,</i>
		3. To whom, viz. to ministers, . . . . .			<i>Who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live :</i>
		4. For whom, viz. for his people, . . . . .			<i>And hath given power and commandment to his ministers,</i>
		5. About what, . . . . .			<i>To declare and pronounce to his people being penitent, The absolution and remission of their sins.</i>
	2. The execution of it, by declaring	1. Who giveth, . . . . .			<i>He, viz. Almighty God,</i>
		2. What is given, viz. deliverance	From the guilt and punishment.		<i>pardoneth and absolveth</i>
		3. To whom, viz.	1. How many,		<i>all them</i>
			2. How qualified,		<i>1. That truly repent and</i>
					<i>2. Unfeignedly believe his holy gospel.</i>
	3. The application or a direction to prayer, shewing,	1. For what we must pray,			<i>Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us</i>
		2. Why we must pray for these, viz. that we may have	1. Present acceptance,		<i>1. True repentance,</i>
			2. Future assistance,		<i>2. And his holy Spirit,</i>
			3. Endless happiness,		<i>That those things may please him which we do at this present, and</i>
		3. How we must pray for them, . . . . .			<i>That the rest of our lives hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy,</i>
					<i>Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</i>

*A Practical Discourse on the Absolution.*

§. III. ALMIGHTY GOD, THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST] There is nothing in the world more desirable than the peace of a good conscience, especially to those who have felt the smart of a conscience disquieted by sin. The pardon of sin, which removes those terrors, is most welcome news to such, and the messengers most acceptable, Rom. x. 15; but he that hath been truly humbled, will make a stop (either out

of doubting or admiration<sup>γ</sup>, when a Nathan is sent from God to tell him of a pardon, 2 Sam. xii. 13, he wishes it might be according to that word; only the greatness of his desires awakens some little jealousies, lest the message be too good to be true, and therefore such an one may ask us by what authority we do this; (Matth. xxi. 23.) we answer, we are but deputed servants (Heb. v. 4.) in all we do, much more in this transcendent part of our office, 2 Cor. v. 8. We shew them our commission from Almighty God, whose power none can question, it being a part of his name, Exod. xxxiv. 7, to be the pardoner of iniquity, transgression, and sin, viz. of all sorts, in thought, word, and deed. His laws indeed forbid sin, and his word decrees punishment for it; but this doth not tie his hands, nor take away his privilege<sup>z</sup> to forgive, by which indeed he shews himself almighty<sup>a</sup>, *Ἀυτοκράτωρ*, supreme Lord of all the world, above us and his own laws, so that he can dispense with them; he that bound can loose without appeal or control, Rev. iii. 7. We come from him who is the offended party, and the judge, who if he please to forgive can do it so fully, that neither men nor devils can call you to a further account, Rom. viii. 33. Now if this term of *Almighty* prove dreadful, as representing an almighty justice, who remits not without blood, Heb. ix. 22, so that the poor soul ask, (with Isaac, Gen. xxii. 7, 8.) *Where is the lamb?* I answer, God hath provided; and in the next words, *Behold the Lamb of God*, Jesus Christ; for this Almighty God is *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*,

<sup>γ</sup> Luke i. 34. Gr. *πὺς ἔσται τοῦτο*, non dubitantis sed admirantis. Grot.

<sup>z</sup> Deus cum legem poneret, non ademit sibi omnem potestatem: sed habet ignoscendi li-

centiam. Lactant.

<sup>a</sup> Imperatori licet sententiam revocare, reumque mortis absolvere, et ipsi ignoscere, quia non est subjectus legibus qui habet potestatem leges ferre. August.

and in him *the Father of mercies and God of all comforts*, 2 Cor. i. 3. He is satisfied with that all-sufficient sacrifice, so that now he can be just and yet forgive us, 1 John i. 9. He that sends us, can pardon by his supremacy easily, may do it by *his covenant in Christ Jesus* justly, will do it through his love in him certainly. And now methinks the pious man should be transported with ecstasies of reverence and love; reverence to this mighty God, love to this merciful Father. Behold that glorious God whose anger thou hast provoked, and whose commissions for thy final ruin were issuing out to be executed by the destroying angel; he is now the Father of Jesus, and for his sake, and at his entreaty, hath sealed thy pardon, and cancelled that warrant signed for thy execution, Ezek. xviii. 4, and sent thee a full and free absolution by the hands of a messenger of peace. What posture is lowly enough to receive it? What love great enough to return for it? O blessed change! Now thou seest what Jesus hath done for thee; look not so much at the hand that brings it, as the power that sent it, and the merits that purchased it: so shall thy faith be firm, thy comfort sweet, and thy peace durable; so that nothing but wilful renewed affronts against him that sent it can alter thy pardon, abate thy joy, or disturb thy happy peace.

§. IV. WHO DESIRETH NOT THE DEATH OF A SINNER] These are the very words of God himself, Ezek. xviii. 23, and for better confirmation they are again repeated, chap. xxxiii. 11, and are strengthened by an oath which he is pleased to take by his life, that is, himself, Heb. vi. 13. Not that he needs such bonds<sup>b</sup> to keep him to his promise, but for the confirmation of our faith, and

<sup>b</sup> Num. xxiii. 19. Οὐ γὰρ δι' ὅρκου πιστὸς ὁ Θεός, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' αὐτὸν ὁ ὅρκος βέβαιος. Philo.

as a condescension to our infirmity<sup>c</sup>. Indeed all God's words are most true, but not many have an oath annexed as this hath, which he (that will not have us<sup>47</sup> swear but upon weighty occasions) would not have added, but because the belief of this is the foundation of all religion, since no man can begin to seek to God till he believe that he delights in mercy, Heb. xi. 6, and is willing to receive those that turn to him. Wherefore let us not doubt so great and necessary a truth confirmed with his oath<sup>d</sup> who assures us, he *wills not the death of a sinner*<sup>e</sup>. He doth not will nor desire it, as we do those things which we have pleasure in, but is even forced to it against his inclination. Which gracious nature of God is here set before the sinner's eyes, to discover what probability there is for his granting out such a commission, because he that desireth not the death of sinners is very likely to offer them a pardon. It is indeed only said, he *wills not their death*; but this phrase means, *he desires the life*, even the everlasting life of all penitents<sup>f</sup>: so that if the hopes of remission will support them, and give them encouragement to seek for happiness, they shall find enough in him. To do good is the nature of God, he doth this willingly and readily, without the consideration of merit or expectation of reward; but punishments are extorted from him<sup>g</sup> by men's wickedness; and when he inflicts them, he expostulates with himself like an indulgent father about to correct a disobedient child<sup>h</sup>. Surely it

<sup>c</sup> Deus loquitur nobiscum lingua filiorum hominum. RR.

<sup>d</sup> O beatos nos quorum causa Deus jurat! O miserrimos si nec Deo juranti credimus. Tert. de Pœnit.

<sup>e</sup> LXX. Μὴ θελήσει θελήσω. Vatab. Num desidero aut volo?

<sup>f</sup> Negatio mali in SS. notat accumulationem boni. John iii.

18; John xi. 26; vide 1 Tim. ii. 4; 1 Thess. v. 9.

<sup>g</sup> Lam. iii. 33. Non affligit ex corde. Vatab. Non est proprium Dei affligere et castigare homines, sed alienum. Annot. ejusdem.

<sup>h</sup> Hosea xi. 8; Ezek. xxxiii. 11.



is no incredible thing, that he should send a pardon. It is the device of Satan to picture the Almighty so dreadful, that he may be a terror to his supplicants, to make men fear and hate and fly from him, rather than serve him with delight. But God is love, and especially kind to men<sup>i</sup>, who have no reason to dishonour him by dismal apprehensions of him. Remember, I beseech you, the price paid for you, the covenant made with you, the promises given to you: call to mind how justly, frequently, and easily he might have cut you off if he had not designed to be reconciled; and think of the earnestness of his invitations, continuance of his patience, the arts of his providence, and all other means used to preserve you, and then blush at yourselves for having ever had hard thoughts of God, or doubting he would not absolve you. Whoever hath so conceived of God is as bad as an atheist; for one takes away God's being, and the other his goodness, as if, like the Scythian deities<sup>k</sup>, he rejoiced in human sacrifices; yea, we ourselves had rather be reported to be dead than traduced living; but though this unbelief do attempt to dishonour God, the mischief lights upon itself; for God is glorious still in mercy, and he that does not believe it, is void of love and hope, weak in faith, full of fears and dismal expectations<sup>l</sup>; and when he that is persuaded of God's mercy can rejoice in hearing this absolution, the other quarrels with the messenger, or suspects the master, and troubles himself with endless scruples.

§. V. BUT RATHER THAT HE SHOULD TURN FROM HIS WICKEDNESS AND LIVE] We must be cautious while we

<sup>i</sup> Οὐδεὶς Θεὸς δυσνοεῖ ἀνθρώποις. Plato. 1 John iv. 8.

<sup>k</sup> Melius esset nullos credere deos, quam esse putare, sed sanguine cæсорum hominum lætatos

existimare. Plutarch. de Superst. Scyth. et Gall.

<sup>l</sup> Et faciunt animos humiles formidine divum, Depressosque premunt ad terram. Læcret.

endeavour to prevent despair, that we encourage not presumption; and lest any should think, when they hear of God's kindness to sinners, that he will allow them their sins, Rom. vi. 1, this is added to shew, that he so desires our happiness as the end, that he desires our holiness as the way thither. He would have us live, viz. in eternal glory, but his desires cannot be accomplished if we continue in our wickedness, because then God is obliged in justice to destroy us; therefore he labours to turn us from those evil ways which end in death, and to bring us into the safe paths of holiness, which are the beginning of heaven upon earth; for the felicity of heaven is but an addition to, and the perfection of holiness. In vain then does any trust to this mercy of God who lives wickedly still; for what father would spare his obstinate child, or what prince pardon his rebellious subjects, but upon condition they will not 48 renew the same crimes? It is possible indeed to obtain a pardon from man, when the offenders mean not to reform; Cæsar was stabbed by Brutus, a reconciled enemy, whom he had adopted for his son; Cicero was beheaded by Popilius whom he had saved from public justice. But the all-seeing God knows your purposes, and can tell what you will do hereafter; so that you may deceive yourselves in hoping for forgiveness while you turn not from your wickedness; but you cannot deceive him, he will not make his mercy the support of your iniquity; nay, it would undo<sup>m</sup> sinners, if he should too easily forgive; such mercy before true repentance would make sin cheap, and encourage men to do wickedly. Wherefore he sends his ambassadors to proclaim his gracious intentions of saving you, lest any should

<sup>m</sup> Τάχιον θεραπευθῆναι, οὐ πρὸς κακοῦ, δεύτερον οὐ φυλαττόμενοι τοῦ καλοῦ γίνεται τοῖς θεραπευομένοις, περιπεσεῖν αὐτῷ, ἐν αὐτῷ ζῶνται. καταφρονούντες γὰρ ὡς εὐίατου τοῦ Orig. περὶ ἀρχ. lib. 3.

grow desperate with Cain, Gen. iv. 13, and as the hardened traitor, resolve to die in their rebellion; but these ministers of God are first to turn (Acts iii. ult.) men from their iniquities; and if they prevail in that, they have a pardon ready sealed, and can assure them of life everlasting. That God who punisheth unwillingly will freely forgive, it is most evident he had rather give you life, and will rejoice if you accept it, and if you miss it, it is because you had rather sin and die, not because he had rather you should so perish.

¶ §. VI. AND HATH GIVEN POWER AND COMMANDMENT TO HIS MINISTERS] Whoever hath a just right and absolute authority, may either exercise it in person, or depute others by communicating to them their power to act subordinately, and then these substitutes have a ministerial right, so far as their commission extends. A temporal prince can do thus, and choose which of his subjects he pleaseth to act in his name and by his authority. Much more may the God of heaven do so; and we are taught whom he did choose, Matt. xxviii. ult., viz. the apostles and their successors, who are his ambassadors, 2 Cor. v. 20, his ministers and stewards of Divine mysteries, 1 Cor. iv. 1, nay, the presidents of souls<sup>a</sup>, and the familiar friends of God<sup>o</sup>, the scripture calls them *angels*<sup>p</sup>, because they have the same employment which the ancients ascribed to angels<sup>q</sup>, to convey messages between God and men, to present their prayers unto him, and bring back the news of his love, and

<sup>a</sup> Heb. xiii. 17. Gr. ἡγούμενοι.

<sup>i</sup> Thess. v. 12. Gr. προϊστάμενοι.

<sup>o</sup> Lev. x. 3. קרִיב Propinqui Dei. Fagius in loc.

<sup>p</sup> Jud. ii. 1. Ch. Par. Ascendit propheta in legatione a coram Domino.

<sup>q</sup> Πρεσβευόμενος καὶ διαγγελοῦ-

σας τὰ τε παρὰ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος τοῖς ὑπηκόοις ἀγαθὰ, καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ φ εἶσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ χρεῖοι. Philo de Plant. Noe. Δαίμονες—Divinorum sunt patefactores—Traducunt divina ad nos et nostra vicissim ad divina perducunt. Jamblich. de myster.

especially to bring this pardon to the penitent, yea, to proclaim it even to the impenitent. Wherefore let those that despise the priest, or who invade his office, or allow no difference between a pardon pronounced by him and an ordinary person, take heed of contemning those whom God so highly honours, and beware they intrench not upon the supreme power of the sender, in disallowing the subordinate power of those that are sent. A condemned man may be told of a pardon intended to him, but he will then believe and rejoice in it, when his prince's herald approacheth with it in his hand: and should not we shew as much reverence and joy upon the news of a greater absolution, as that learned professor did<sup>r</sup>, who, though in some things he dissented, yet in this of absolution was so clear, that he desired it on his death-bed, and kissed the hands of his brother professor<sup>s</sup>, who at his earnest request had absolved him. But besides their power, as the ambassadors of Christ, they have a special charge and command to restore them that fall, Gal. vi. 1; to comfort the feeble-minded, 1 Thess. v. 14; and under the allegory of shepherds, Ezek. xxxiv. 4, &c. are severely threatened, if by their neglect the diseased, broken, and scattered ones of the flock shall perish; and certainly, if sinners grow desperate because they know not of a pardon, it will be heavily charged upon these shepherds, who do not proclaim this (as we do in our church every day) to bring such to a hearty repentance. A power we have always, but when there is any truly humbled, then we have an express command to loose them of their bonds.

§. VII. TO DECLARE AND PRONOUNCE TO HIS PEOPLE BEING PÉNITENT, THE ABSOLUTION AND REMISSION OF THEIR SINS] As the priests of the law were to pronounce

<sup>r</sup> D. Reynolds.

<sup>s</sup> Dr. Holland.

a blessing upon the offerers, Numb. vi. 24, &c., so those of the gospel are to dispense the blessing of absolution unto the penitent. And we declare it in this daily form according to the power which God hath given us; 49 but upon great need and especial occasion, are ready more solemnly to pronounce it to those that are prepared for it, according to the particular charge we have received; and in both cases we can assure those that truly repent, that the guilt of their sin shall be absolved, and the punishment remitted. But God himself will not forgive any but those that are penitent, and therefore his servants cannot, whose power in this is limited and regulated by God's will. Indeed we cannot see the hearts of men, nor infallibly determine of the sincerity of their repentance; but yet we see external signs of it, prostration, confession, and in some sighs and tears. Wherefore charity obligeth us to judge favourably<sup>t</sup> in dubious cases, and it is better to commit an error on the right hand of mercy, than a horrid crime by cruelty<sup>u</sup>; and good men<sup>x</sup>, especially ministers, out of tenderness should hope the best. The rabbins say in the cause of blood, if one have the casting voice, he must ever take the merciful side, and give his suffrage for sparing; and the same reason holds here, especially because in a mixed congregation many are truly penitent, and some of them much dejected, and these must not starve for fear others surfeit, lest we *destroy the righteous with the wicked*. Wherefore we hold out a daily pardon; but we sufficiently exclude the ungodly, because we declare it only belongs to the

<sup>t</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 7. Justius est occulta de manifestis præjudicare, quam manifesta de occultis prædamnare. Tertul. Apol.

<sup>u</sup> Εἰ δέον τὶ ἁμαρτεῖν τὸ ἀδικῶς ἀπολύσαι, ἢ τὸ ἀδικῶς ἀπωλέσαι

δοσιώτερον. Antiphan.

<sup>x</sup> Credulitas error est magis quam culpa, et quidem in optimi cujusque mentem facillime irrepit. Cicero.

penitent. Yet though the minister is to judge charitably, the people are to examine impartially, because though the servant cannot, yet the master can distinguish between the penitent and impenitent. And though the minister shall have a reward for his charity, the obstinate sinner shall not have the benefit thereof. Let it therefore be your care to examine your hearts and repent truly, that so you may not only have a pardon from man, but from Almighty God also; for he that truly repents, and then comes humbly to receive this absolution, shall have God sealing it to him.

§. VIII. HE PARDONETH AND ABSOLVETH] The unjust steward for flattery and advantage, doth in his own name by private compacts diminish and remit his master's debts, without his consent, Luke xvi. 5, 6, and those priests are false stewards to the God of heaven, who in the same manner acquit sinners. But whatever the priests of the Roman church may get by such fraudulent dealings, sure I am God keeps so exact a debt-book, that he will lose nothing, only the credulous debtor shall suffer by his rash belief, when he is called over to a new reckoning; but because fidelity is the most necessary qualification in a steward, 1 Cor. iv. 2, we do not pretend to do this in our own names, but being to publish a pardon, we do it *in nomine Domini*, (not we, but he pardoneth,) for it is God's sole privilege to forgive sins. The Scribes and Pharisees called it blasphemy for any to pretend to this power, Luke v. 21, and the Fathers of the Christian church prove Christ to be God, because he forgave sin<sup>y</sup>, which none can do but God<sup>z</sup>, and his son Jesus, who is also very God, and

<sup>y</sup> Ergo qui remittit, Deus est, quia nemo remittit nisi Deus. Hilar. in Mat. cap. 8.

<sup>z</sup> 'Ἀμαρτήματα γὰρ ἀφεῖναι' μόνος τῷ Θεῷ δυνατόν. Chrysost. in 1 Cor. xv.

purchased this mercy of absolution with his own blood<sup>a</sup>; wherefore we give to God the things which are God's, and plainly declare he is the author, we the dispensers only of this favour, the witnesses and messengers to bring certain news thereof<sup>b</sup>. The supreme Judge, he from whose sentence is no appeal, pardoneth thee; fear not then the state of Agag whom Saul had pardoned, but God had not; whereupon Samuel hewed him to pieces in the midst of his vain hopes that the bitterness of death was past. He pardoneth that hath no equal to examine or approve, much less superior to disannul his actings. Our absolution therefore is profitable, when the persons are meet to receive it<sup>c</sup>, but the stamp of God will make it current in heaven itself. The priest's pardon is not complete till it be ratified there; while we are holding out this absolution, he that knows who among you are true believers and really penitent, will to such seal their pardon in heaven, which will make ours to be valid: for it is our great Master that  
 50 absolveth, because what we do is pronounced in his name, dispensed by his authority, offered on his conditions, and confirmed by his approbation.

§. IX. ALL THEM THAT TRULY REPENT AND UNFEIGNEDLY BELIEVE HIS HOLY GOSPEL] Repentance and faith are by Christ, Mark i. 15, and his apostles, Acts xx. 21, made the conditions of all the gospel promises, and without them no absolution can be had. Those that have these, no man can condemn, but without these no man can acquit. It was therefore a great arrogance in

<sup>a</sup> Ille solus peccata dimittit qui pro peccatis mortuus est. Ambr. Veniam peccatis quæ in ipsum commissa sunt, solus potest ille largiri qui peccata nostra portavit. Cypr.

<sup>b</sup> En, fili, certifico te remissa

tibi esse peccata; hujus me testem habebis. Vade in pace. Fer. in Matt. ix.

<sup>c</sup> Tunc enim vera est absolutio præsentis, cum æterni arbitrium sequitur judicis. Gregor. Hom. 26.

those ecclesiastics in St. Jerome's time, who imagined they could save or destroy at pleasure<sup>d</sup>, and it is as great a vanity in any to believe a servant acting contrary to his master's known will. Wherefore if any by hypocrisy shall think to surprise an absolution; or if he that dispenseth it act by prejudice or corruption, it will be insignificant, because it is he must ratify the pardon, who can see whether these qualifications are in him that receives it or no; and though we hold out this act of grace to all, yet our master pardons none but such as do repent truly and believe unfeignedly; and how many soever do so, though they have been the worst of sinners, they shall every one be forgiven. Let us then take care to come, 1, *with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart*, sorrowing and being ashamed, fearing exceedingly, confessing humbly, and resolving heartily against all sin; let us beware that a hard heart, a customary confession and hypocritical pretences, do not ruin our hopes and blast our desires; for he only pardoneth the real penitent. 2. Let us bring with us an unfeigned faith in his gospel, trusting in the assurances of his promises, persuading ourselves of the necessity and excellence of his laws, and confirming our souls in the expectation of his rewards; and this faith unfeignedly will (1 Tim. i. 5.) open the door of mercy: but for that bold challenge which some make to the promises and the benefits of the gospel, while they are void of hatred to sin or love to God; it is only feigned, to stifle the accusations of conscience, to ward off the threats of the law, and to give the man liberty to sin. God will never accept such to remission, who

<sup>d</sup>—Ut vel damnent innocentes potest, nec Dominus ipse; si vel solvere se noxios arbitrantur. peccaverimus nisi poenitentiam Hieron. Com. in Mat. lib. 3. deferentibus non relaxat. Ambr. Ne angelus nec archangelus Epist. 28. ad Theodos.



have no other ground for their confidence, but only because they had persuaded themselves of a falsehood. Remember you come to him for pardon *that searcheth the heart*, and strive that your repentance may be true, your faith cordial and sound; and learn by this order first to repent of your former evil ways, before you entertain too particular confidences of God's love and your interest in Jesus: for when you have truly repented, the more firmly you believe, the greater will be God's glory, the sweeter your comfort, and the sooner will your absolution be confirmed. Though your iniquities are heinous and innumerable, if upon the sight of them you do condemn yourself, with real purposes of amendment, and (notwithstanding your unworthiness) do trust to the merits of Jesus, and believe all the gracious promises of the gospel, I doubt not to assure you this your repentance and faith shall pass the test of God himself, and your desires shall be satisfied in his mercy.

§. X. WHEREFORE LET US BESEECH HIM TO GRANT US TRUE REPENTANCE, AND HIS HOLY SPIRIT] The duty of a minister chiefly consists in instruction and exhortation<sup>e</sup>, the first to convince the understanding, the second to engage the affections, both which parts of this office the priest doth here exercise; for hitherto he hath testified there is remission to be obtained, and now he exhorts to seek for it. In this paragraph we are directed how to obtain, in the following we are encouraged by the benefits to be had thereby. Now this present exhortation is a conclusion inferred from all the former parts of this absolution, which in this word *wherefore* are urged as so many motives to quicken our addresses, viz. 1. Since God who is full of power and mercy would not the death of us sinners, but desires we may live;

<sup>e</sup> Acts ii. 40. Gr. *διεμαρτύρητο καὶ παρεκάλει.*

therefore we may cheerfully come to him for help, who will be as well pleased with the opportunity of giving, as we with the mercy of receiving. 2. He hath com-51 missionated ministers to be the heralds of his willingness to forgive; wherefore let us, in answer to this gracious proclamation, go in and submit to him, who though he be the offended party, first sent to us to be reconciled. 3. He hath assured us he will absolve none without *true repentance*; wherefore let us beg of him who requires this condition, to give what he requires<sup>f</sup>. Upon all these considerations *let us beseech* &c. If we now make not our applications, it will be a despising his love, slighting his message, and sending back his servants empty. O let us earnestly pray for true penitence; we are encouraged by his gracious nature, engaged by his courteous offer of a treaty, urged by necessity, as being not like to be forgiven without it. Further, we must ask these favours of him from whom comes *every good and perfect gift*, James i. 17; and if we consider what we ask, viz. repentance and the Holy Spirit, we shall easily discern they must not be sought any where else. Repentance is a change of the notions of the mind, the choices of the will, the actings of the affections and passions, enduing us with new joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, desires and aversations: so that it is a kind of new creation<sup>g</sup>; and he alone that brought life out of death, and light out of darkness, can bring us from the death of sin and darkness of iniquity, to the life and light of holiness and piety<sup>h</sup>. We can fall down by our own weight, but we cannot rise out of this narrow pit without help; nay, we sink lower, for our hearts are as backward to repent as forward to sin,

<sup>f</sup> Domine, da quod jubes, et *καὶ τὸν ἀνθρώπον*.  
jube quod vis. D. Augustin.

<sup>h</sup> Nulla sine Deo mens bona.

<sup>g</sup> Eph. iv. 24. *Ἐνδύσασθαι τὸν* Senec.

and by frequent commission we love sin more, and are more loath to part with it: yesterday we mistook by accident; to-day we desire to be again in such circumstances; to-morrow we shall run into them<sup>i</sup>; so that we must seek repentance from God, and his Holy Spirit also, which is therefore called *his*, because it only proceeds from him. Now these two being both so necessary for us, and of so incomparable advantage to us, let us humbly on our knees beseech God to grant them to us; which word, *grant*, (Acts ii. 18.) denotes a free act of grace from a prince to his subject, though few offending subjects can have a pardon granted upon their repentance; yet God deals so with us, and hath not only promised to forgive us when we do repent, John vi. 37, but to give us grace that we may repent, Acts v. 31; and if we have this gracious assistance, no doubt we shall repent truly, and not fall into Ahab's hypocrisy, Israel's treachery, Ps. lxxviii. 34, nor Judas his despair. O let us pray for his Holy Spirit of grace, which will open our eyes to see our sins, soften our hearts to mourn for them, and strengthen our purposes to amend them; and this is true repentance, yea, this is an unfeigned faith also (which is here understood though not expressed); for faith and true repentance are so inseparably joined, that in scripture repentance is put for both<sup>k</sup>, because he that is truly humbled and really purposed to amend, doth ever trust in God's mercy; or else faith is left out here, because when we pray for his Holy Spirit, it is that it may produce in us all graces, especially faith, which is that gracious fruit of the spirit of adoption, Gal. iv. 16, by which we call God Father, and as such rely on him. It is certain if we can prevail with God for his Holy Spirit, it will bring faith and

<sup>i</sup> — Viresque acquirit eundo. <sup>k</sup> Matt. iv. 17, comp. with Mark i. 15.

all graces with it, and will assist us to do good: when repentance hath taken us off from our evil courses, this will keep out those lusts which repentance began to exclude; but observe, repentance goes first, for we must not expect this holy dove will abide in impure places<sup>1</sup>, since even the unclean spirit expects his house to be swept and garnished, Matt. xii. 44. We may then hope to have our prayers for God's Holy Spirit heard, when repentance hath prepared his lodgings in our hearts.

§. XI. THAT THOSE THINGS MAY PLEASE HIM WHICH WE DO AT THIS PRESENT] Having thus taught you who to pray to, and what to pray for, it remains that we shew the great advantages of having these prayers heard, that so you may not put up so weighty requests without such hearty desires and zealous affections as are suitable to them. For this one petition granted will procure you, 1, present acceptance, 2, future assistance, 3, endless happiness; but if you pray not so devoutly and earnestly as to obtain *repentance and the Holy Spirit*, your absolution must be cancelled, your services rejected, your souls continue polluted here, and <sup>52</sup> be condemned to endless misery hereafter: so that we hope your own interest will quicken you most passionately to beg for them: to which purpose consider them severally. 1. If your confession, prayers, and endeavours be such as can prevail with God to give you a *true repentance and his Holy Spirit*, then all the duties now performed shall be acceptable, particularly and in the first place, that which the minister is about, viz. the absolution; this shall be confirmed by God, and he will assent to it, so that your pardon shall be enrolled in heaven; and then all other duties that we and you do

<sup>1</sup> Pietas inducit Spiritum Sanctum. RR. — Ad candida tecta columbæ.

shall be pleasing to God and beneficial to you; our mutual and common prayers shall be answered; our praises accepted; our hearing shall be converting and salutiferous; our communicating, an infallible conveyance and comfortable seal of grace and peace. But without repentance all our prayers and praises, and all we do<sup>m</sup>, shall be rejected as a mocking of God. Without his Holy Spirit also, all our services are harsh and unpleasing, flat and dull in God's account; it is this good Spirit that makes our hearts and tongues agree; this enlightens our minds to see our wants, quickens our memory to remember them, toucheth our hearts with a sense of them, confirms our faith that God can supply us, and enlarges our affections to beg the relief of them. In a word, this Spirit of God helps us to ask, inclines him to give, and fits us to receive all we pray for; so that God is not pleased when we worship him without it, Gal. iv. 6, John iv. 24, Rom. viii. 26, and denies nothing when we have it: yea, our Saviour accounts<sup>n</sup> it the same, to give us the Holy Spirit, and to give us all *good things* that spring from it. And now who would not earnestly beg for such a true repentance as might invite this Holy Spirit into their hearts, which will be the seal of their pardon, and make all they do well-pleasing to God. To please him is the Christian's highest aim; it was David's prayer, Psalm xix. 14, and the greatest blessing the priest could wish, Numb. vi. 24—26, Psalm xx. 3, 4, that Almighty God might accept them. Poor Socrates, after many a tedious step in a virtuous but afflicted state<sup>o</sup>, could not tell whether he had given content to his deities or no. But who-

<sup>m</sup> See of this at large before in sect. II.

<sup>n</sup> τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, Luke xi. 13, ἰς τὰ ἀγαθὰ, Matth. vii. 11.

<sup>o</sup> An diis placent quæ feci nescio, hoc autem solum scio, me sedulo hæc egisse ut placeant.

ever of you have the grace of repentance and the Holy Spirit, are not in those uncertainties, but have Enoch's testimony, Heb. ii. 5, that you do please God.

§. XII. AND THAT THE REST OF OUR LIFE HEREAFTER MAY BE PURE AND HOLY] This is the second benefit and motive earnestly to pray for these things; for so you shall not only be welcomed at present with a gracious smile, but all your lives long be reputed as the friends of God, and by his help shall be preserved pure as a true repentance hath made you, and holy as those are who are under the guard of the spirit of holiness. Pray therefore with all your heart for a true repentance, or else as soon as your soul is washed, it will return to its impure wallowings, and all your labour is in vain hitherto<sup>p</sup>; for a feigned repentance sends this Absalom away for a while, but upon the next interview it will hurry us with more passion into its embraces. Whereas the deep wounds of the true penitent make sin hateful to him while he lives, and he that gets on a white garment with so much pains will not easily sully it, but carefully preserve it pure as his tears have made it. And upon this ground also we must be very pressing for the Holy Spirit, which if we can obtain, we shall not only be preserved from the spots of sin, but shall shine with the lustre of a holy life; our goodness is apt to vanish, Hos. vi. 4, we are wavering and soon weary, unless we have that establishing Spirit, Psalm li. 14, which David prays for, and then all duties will be easy. Our love and the sense of his assistance will carry us so cheerfully through them all, that they shall be our pleasure, not our burden: and when we are arrived to this, nothing can bribe us to forsake them. O happy soul! which is thus begun to be restored to that purity and holiness which are part of God's image, Eph. iv. 24,

<sup>p</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 22. *Laterem lavare.*

and parcels of the Divine perfections. Blessed is he that is so far advanced, that God is not like to forsake him, because he hath made him holy, pure, and a fit temple for the inhabitation of his Spirit; nor is he likely ever to forsake that God whose mercy hath saved him, whose grace doth refresh him, whose ways please him, and whose glorious bounty (which faith discovers) doth still allure him to press forward to nearer  
53 unions and unseparable connections. No state under the sun is to be longed after and wished for like this, which a true repentance and God's Holy Spirit bring us to.

§. XIII. SO THAT AT THE LAST WE MAY COME TO HIS ETERNAL JOY, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN] There is nothing more desirable than the sweet peace of a good conscience, but only the end and perfection thereof, even that happiness which is infinite and endless, which the scripture calls *an eternal and everlasting joy*, Isa. xxxv. 10, chap. li. 7, and chap. lxi. 11, which men nor devils cannot lessen or interrupt, much less take from us. If God give us true repentance, it will preserve us from the sins which forfeit this joy; and if he add his Holy Spirit, it will safely conduct us into those paths of righteousness which lead to that bliss, where we can desire no more, because we have all that is desirable. There are no cares to disturb, no fears to allay, nor sorrows to abate those ravishments of delight for ever; there is joy which far surpasseth the half-sad and mixed pleasures of this world, being nothing else but pure delight, which pleaseth by its own excellence, and by having no fears nor possibility of defaultance in degree or continuance. We taste something of it in the pleasing calm of a strong faith and a quiet conscience, and cheerful expectations of God's love; but this is but the landscape of our hea-

venly Canaan which Jesus hath purchased for us, and God the Father will grant unto us, and the most Holy Spirit will be our<sup>9</sup> guide thither. The whole glorious Trinity will put us into possession thereof, and then rejoice over us to all eternity. The Father who forgave us, the Son who died for us, and the blessed Spirit who wrought effectually in us, will communicate this their joy with us and to us for ever. And lastly, to shew that you thankfully follow these directions of the ministers, and have in your own heart and thoughts most devoutly petitioned God for a true repentance and his Holy Spirit (by means whereof all these incomparable benefits may redound to you); in testimony, I say, hereof, you sum up all in a petitionary Amen, desiring it may be so, and assenting also to the truth of all this. It is most true, and therefore so be it unto you. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Absolution.*

Be it known unto every one of you that hath confessed his sins with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, that **ALMIGHTY GOD**, supreme King of heaven and earth, whose royal prerogative it is fully to acquit or finally to condemn, he being **THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**, is now, by his merits, of an angry Judge become a tender Father, and hath solemnly sworn he is one who **DESIRETH NOT**, neither taketh pleasure in, **THE DEATH OR DAMNATION OF A SINNER**, though never so justly deserving it, **BUT RATHER** chooseth to have opportunity to shew mercy; and therefore he useth all possible means **THAT HE** who hath sinned **MAY TURN FROM HIS WICKEDNESS**, which would bring him into condemnation, that by leaving these paths of death, he may be forgiven, **AND LIVE** in holiness and comfort here, and in everlasting joy hereafter. **AND** to confirm this, and keep penitent sinners from despair, he **HATH GIVEN POWER** by virtue of his supreme authority, **AND COMMANDMENT** for the exercise of this power on

<sup>9</sup> Psal. li. 14. LXX. Πνεῦμα ἡγεμονικόν.



special occasions TO HIS MINISTERS, which are lawfully chosen to be his ambassadors, ordering them TO DECLARE at all times his willingness to pardon, AND TO PRONOUNCE absolution more particularly TO HIS PEOPLE, BEING grieved and truly PENITENT for all their offences, (as you now from your hearts seem to be.) Know ye therefore that we are authorized in God's name to bring to such this message of THE ABSOLUTION from the guilt, AND REMISSION of the punishment OF THEIR SINS; and by virtue of the power, and in obedience to the command given to us by God, we do now proclaim, that not we, but HE, that can do it by his own right, PARDONETH AND ABSOLVETH both from guilt and punishment ALL THEM that are qualified for a pardon, by those conditions which are by him required, even them THAT TRULY REPENT, and grieve for all their evil ways, longing to be delivered from them, and seriously purposing to amend them; these shall never be condemned, if  
54 they will trust in his mercy, AND UNFEIGNEDLY BELIEVE the promises of HIS HOLY GOSPEL, particularly accepting this message of his love therein manifested. WHEREFORE since God is so able and willing to pardon, and hath sent his ministers to offer a pardon to the penitent and believing, O let us not lose the benefit of so gracious an offer, but LET US all (since all are sinners) go together to the throne of grace upon this courteous summons, and BESEECH HIM earnestly TO GRANT US TRUE REPENTANCE, such as he can work in us, and such as he will accept to our forgiveness; and having thereby cleansed us from by-past sins, let us more heartily beg the help of his grace, AND HIS HOLY SPIRIT, to purify our hearts, strengthen our faith, and bless our endeavours of reformation; which petitions we must ask fervently, 1, THAT THOSE THINGS MAY PLEASE HIM, even our absolution, our prayers, and all the other duties WHICH WE DO AT THIS PRESENT perform in his house. AND, 2, THAT THE REST OF OUR LIVES, which formerly have been so sinful, HEREAFTER MAY BE PURE from wickedness, sanctified AND HOLY in all points: so THAT, 3, AT THE LAST, when death puts an end to the tedious sorrows and short contents of this mortal life, WE MAY COME TO HIS ETERNAL JOY, which is unconceivable and endless, without mixture or diminution; and which is so much above our deserts, that we

could not hope ever to obtain it, but THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, who by his death purchased this pardon, by his intercession prevaleth for this grace, and at his ascension took possession of this eternal joy for all that are truly absolved; to which we all say AMEN. Lord, be it so unto us. Amen.

## SECTION V.

55

## OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

§. I. WHAT hath hitherto been performed by the church was rather a preparation to prayer than prayer itself; for this confession and absolution answers to the heathen washings, and those the Jews used before they approached their altars: so that we may say the first place is by us assigned to the first and chiefest of all prayers which should have stood in the front of all; but only that till we had repented of our disobedience we ought not to call God Father, and till we have his pardon, we cannot with comfort call him so. He that hath been in rebellion must have his offence forgiven before he presume to petition for acts of grace; so we being predisposed by confession and absolution, begin with this prayer. And sure this deserves to be first, since it was made by Jesus, and indited by his Divine Spirit to be a guide to, and a part of, our daily devotions<sup>a</sup>, to be used as oft as we need our daily bread, saying these words, or praying in this manner, which is all one; as when the Jews are commanded to bless after this manner<sup>b</sup>, they do keep both words and language in the pronunciation. This prayer Christ had delivered in his first sermon, Matt. vi, but it seems his disciples

<sup>a</sup> Luke xi. 2. λέγετε. Matt. vi. 9. οὕτως οὖν προσεύχεσθε. Vid. LXX. in Numb. vi. 23. οὕτως λέγοντες.

<sup>b</sup> Debet benedictio ista proferri lingua sancta, cum nomine Dei proprio. Fagius in loc.

did not then understand it for a form<sup>c</sup>, so that the next year they requested him for such a form as the doctors among them were wont to give to their scholars, to be a badge of their relation to such a master; and then, Luke xi. 1, our Lord prescribed this set form, which for words and phrases he took<sup>d</sup> out of the Jewish forms with little variation<sup>e</sup>, to shew how far he was from all affectation of novelty in devotion. And certainly we may discern in it a lively resemblance of its Author, who was the highest and lowest, the greatest and the least, God and Man. The comprehensiveness of it is the admiration of the wisest<sup>f</sup>, the plainness suiting still the meanest capacity; for it is so clear, that all may understand it; so short, that any may learn it; so full, as to take in all our wants; and so exact, as to shew us what we should be<sup>g</sup>, as well as what we should ask, and is the epitome<sup>h</sup> of the gospel. Herein we glorify God in desiring his honour may be made manifest, and are mindful of ourselves in praying for all graces, reverence and fear, sanctification and purity, submission and obedience active and passive, faith and love, diligence and zeal, constancy and perseverance: and for our bodies we beg food and raiment, health and strength, riches and friends, a good name and a long life, so far as they are good for us. We look back to our sins past, and humbly crave remission; we look forward, first to our duty, engaging ourselves in purposes of holy charity, and then to our danger, earnestly entreating

<sup>c</sup> See M. Mede's *Diatrib.* on Matt. vi. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Tam longe abfuit Dominus ecclesiæ ab omni affectatione non necessariæ novitatis. *Grotius.*

<sup>e</sup> Vide Capelli not. in *Crit. Sacr.*

<sup>f</sup> Quantum substringitur ver-

bis, tantum diffunditur sensibus. *Tert.*

<sup>g</sup> Unusquisque nostrum sic discat orare, et de orationis lege qualis esse debeat noscere. *Cypr. de Orat.*

<sup>h</sup> *Breviarium Evangelii. Tertul. de Orat.*

his preventing grace and pity may preserve us from sin and punishment, the snares of men and devils. Finally, we look upwards in an humble acknowledgment of his goodness, his greatness, and just deservings of all honour and glory from us and all the world. In this one form, as we represent all our wants, so we exercise all graces<sup>i</sup>; here is our belief of his goodness, our persuasion of his love, our desire after his holiness, our subjection to his authority, and hope of his kingdom, our willingness to suffer, and readiness to do his will; here we declare our dependance on his providence, and contentedness with his dispensations, our penitence for former sins, and resolutions of amendment; our sense of our own frailty, and our trust in his mercy and grace, and all this ending with acts of faith and love, joy and praise, devotion and adoration: so that this Divine form is fitted for all times, and all places, and all persons. The ignorant must use it, because he may understand it; the knowing, that he may understand it better; the sinner, that he may be holy; the holy man, lest he become a sinner; the rich prays thus for the sanctification of his gifts, the poor for the supply of his wants; in 56 private it extends to particular needs, in public it unites us all into one soul, and makes us equally desire<sup>k</sup> others' good with our own, being indited in a public style; so that though it be useful everywhere, yet it is especially fitted for the assemblies of the church, where all antiquity used it as the salt of all other offices<sup>l</sup>, and we in imitation of them. For our church

<sup>i</sup> Quot simul expunguntur officia? Dei honor in patre, fidei testimonium in nomine, oblatio obsequii in voluntate, commemoratio spei in regno, petitio vitæ in pane, exomologesis debitorum in deprecatione, sollicitudo tentationum in postulatione tu-

telæ. Tertul. de Orat.

<sup>k</sup> Non singulis privatam precem mandavit, sed oratione communi et concordii prece pro omnibus jussit orare. Cypr. Epist. 8.

<sup>l</sup> Sal omnium divinorum officiorum. Durand.

prescribes it here after the absolution, for repentance; after the word of God read, and the recital of the Creed, for assistance in holiness and confirmation in faith; in the Litany, for deliverance from evil; in the Communion Service, to dispose us for a penitent hearing of the laws of God; never too often, nor never superfluously (as you shall see afterwards); for how can we too often join his most perfect prayers to ours that are so imperfect, since by him both we and our prayers are alone made acceptable? Those that presented petitions to the Roman emperors drew them up by the direction of some judicious lawyer; but we have this sacred form from the Wonderful Counsellor, who came out of the bosom of his Father, and knew his treasures as well as our wants; he best could inform us what was fit for us to ask, and what most likely for him to grant; he was to go to heaven to be our advocate there, and he hath taught us to use this here, that there may be a harmony between our requests and his. What zeal and height of devout affections are sufficient to offer up this prayer, which was drawn up by the great Master of requests, and orderer of all intercourse between God and man? How sure is this of acceptance<sup>m</sup>, which is stamped with his image, signed with his hand, and sent in his name! His power will make it prevalent, and God's love to his dear Son will make it acceptable<sup>n</sup>; for what can pierce the ears or melt the heart of a tender father more readily than the voice of his only and beloved son? Use it therefore reverently and heartily, and doubtless you will be accepted.

<sup>m</sup> Animata suo privilegio ascendit cœlum commendans Patri quæ Filius docuit. Tertul.

<sup>n</sup> Dum prece et oratione quam Filius docuit ad Patrem loquimur, facilius audiamur. Cypr.

*The Division of the Lord's Prayer.*

§. II. The Lord's Prayer hath three parts :	1. The preface or compellation, expressing,	}	Either God's glory, by	1. Charity to men, . . . . .	Our
				2. Faith in God, . . . . .	Father
				3. Fear of God, . . . . .	which art in heaven,
	2. The petitions, which concern	}	Or our own good, in	1. The reverence of his attributes, . . .	Hallowed be thy name :
				2. The exercise of his authority, . . . . .	Thy kingdom come :
				3. The fulfilling of his will, . . . . .	Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven :
				1. Temporal supplies,	Give us this day our daily bread :
				2. Remission of sins past, . . . . .	And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us :
				3. Deliv- erance for the future from	sin, . . . . .
	3. The conclusion or doxology, being an acknowledgment of God,	}		Punish- ment, ..	But deliver us from evil :
				1. As supreme, . . . . .	For thine is the kingdom :
				2. As omnipotent, . . . . .	the power,
3. As gracious, . . . . .				and the glory,	
			4. As eternal, . . . . .	for ever and ever. Amen.	

*A Practical Discourse on the Lord's Prayer.*

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§. III. OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN] This was the usual preface to the Jewish forms of prayer, who styled God, their *Father which was in heaven*<sup>o</sup>. But since they owned not God the Son, they could not justly call God Father, and being in bondage to the Law<sup>p</sup>, they were servants rather than sons, and such (by their own rule) might not call their masters by the name of father. So that this appellation suiteth us better, who are by Jesus adopted to be the sons of God, and by his Spirit (who obtained that privilege) we are taught to cry, *Abba, Father*, Gal. iv. 6. He that is the eternal Son of God himself, who hath alone right to this name, hath put the words in our mouths: and what fitter words to begin our prayers than these two

<sup>o</sup> Pater noster qui es in coelis, fac nobis gratiam. Sed. Tephil. Lusitan. Deus noster qui in coelo unicus es. In lib. Mus.

<sup>p</sup> Gal. iv. 6. Servis et ancillis non permissum Abba vel Imma dominis suis dicere. In Gemara.

which include the principal requisites of prayer, faith and charity? No man can call God his Father but by faith, and he must be in charity that can add *our Father*, which cannot be said devoutly but by him that is free from wrath to man, or doubting concerning God, 2 Tim. ii. 8. It is certain God is our Father, for he hath created us after his own image, and begotten us again by the washing of regeneration; he feeds and clothes us, preserves and provides for us; he teacheth us what is right, and correcteth us when we do amiss; and finally, he hath done like a father in providing an eternal inheritance for us, 2 Cor. xii. 14, even such as men make for their children<sup>9</sup>. He hath ever expressed a fatherly love to us, a care of us, and tenderness towards us; and this Jesus obligeth us to acknowledge, Isai. lxiii. 16, that while we call him Father, we may be grateful to him, and have the affections of children upon us when we come to him in our needs, trusting in his mercy, persuaded of his all-sufficiency, rejoicing in hope, and filled with love and joy, and comfortable expectations, because we are going to *our Father*. And lest if we were uncharitable to our brethren, that unlikeness to God should confute our calling him Father, Matt. v. 45. Psalm cxlv. 9, who is loving to every man, we must by adding *our*, shew an universal charity to all the world, not arrogantly confining this privilege to ourselves, and out of pride or passion excluding others from it; but we must comprehend all men within it as our brethren, sons of the same Father, making a common prayer to the common Father of all mankind; not looking sordidly to ourselves alone, but as members of the same mystical body, 1 Cor. xii. 25, having a feeling of each other's wants, and desiring the

<sup>9</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 19. C. P. Talis enim est provisio humana.

preservation of the whole, rather than our private satisfactions ; we must therefore, when we begin this prayer, lay aside all malice and envy, and with loving hearts, joined hands, and united voices, address ourselves as so many dear brothers and sisters to *our Father* ; so shall we cause the angels to sing, *Ecce quam bonum !* Psalm cxxxiii. 1. *How pleasant a thing it is !* &c., and no music will be more pleasing in the ears of our heavenly Father. But many children have gone to their earthly parents in their needs and found no relief, because they had no means to help, and many could no otherwise know the love of their dear fathers than by a sigh or a tear, “O my poor child, I cannot help thee ;” whereas we need not fear such returns ; for our Father reigns in heaven, the centre of all happiness, so that he can do what he pleases, Psalm cxv. 3 ; for omnipotence and all-sufficiency are annexed inseparably to that royal throne. And here our Lord Jesus presents us with the seat of his glory, to mind us to acknowledge his dominion and power, and to adore his infiniteness and immensity ; for he whom we pray to hath all things under him, to be ordered by his will ; and all creatures, even millions of blessed angels, to execute his commands. Which should heighten our minds to ask things more excellent than the perishing vanities of this world. This remembrance that he is in heaven should strengthen our faith in his power and mercy ; for what shall we his children want on earth, who have a Father in 58 heaven that can do all things, and who is so full of goodness, that he is not moved by all his glory to despise us, but whatever advantages he hath, his love makes them all ours ? He is in heaven now, and intends to bring us thither to him ; yet while we are upon earth, we must approach with lowly addresses and all reverence ; because we come before him who *is in*



heaven, and adored by the blessed angels with low prostrations and veiled faces.

§. IV. HALLOWED BE THY NAME] The glory of God, which is the principal end of our creation, ought to be the first of our desires; and we are doubly obliged to pray for the honour of his name, both because he deserves it upon the account of his glorious perfections, on which ground all men are bound to adore the name of God; and also because he is *our Father*, and so he may expect peculiar honour from us. If we so much desire the honour of our natural fathers<sup>r</sup> that no good children can endure to hear them reproached, how much more should we long after our heavenly Father's glory, and pray that none might abuse his sacred name, which (if we be his true sons) will be unsufferable to us; how can we but desire it may be treated by us and all men at all times, with that reverence and religious respect that befits so great a Majesty? He is separated from this lower world as far as heaven is above the earth, and therefore his name is to be esteemed as no common thing, but as separated and set apart from all other names, which is the meaning<sup>s</sup> of hallowing of it, the regarding it as a thing truly excellent; it is in itself so holy that it cannot be profaned by men nor devils, so as to lose any part of its essential purity, even as the sun's illustrious beams cannot be polluted with the evaporations of a filthy dunghill. The blasphemies of hell itself can do no prejudice to God's name, any more than the barking of dogs and howling of evening wolves do to the splendour of the moon's shining. And for this cause it were needless to pray that God's name

<sup>r</sup> Nullum probum intolerabilem ignominia parentum: Quis non commotus est?

κἂν θρασύσπλαγχνός τις ᾖ,  
ὅταν συνειδῇ μητρὸς ἢ πατρὸς κακά.

Grot. ex Eurip.

<sup>s</sup> Levit. xx. 24, Deut. xxvi. 18, 19. Sanctificatio est separatio per modum excellentiæ.

R. D. Kimchi in Isai. lvi. 2.

might either be or remain holy ; but only that since it is holy in itself, it may by us and all men be looked on as infinitely above us, and used with reverence and an awful regard. Now this name of his, is himself and all that is his ; it is himself as he can be known<sup>t</sup> by us ; for it signifies his attributes, and all that his name is called upon, all that represents him to us, or relates to him, his works, his worship, his sabbaths, his vicegerents and officers in church and state, and all that is given to him or his ; and since we cannot behold God's essence, which is incomprehensible, our reverence to him will appear by our respect to his name, which is all we have of him with us here on earth. Then his name is hallowed by us and all people, when we love his goodness, trust in his mercy, believe his promises, fear his threatenings, acknowledge his wisdom, adore his power, and live answerable to his attributes ; when we praise him for his works, speak well of all he doth, and worship him with humility and faith, true affections and hearty desires ; when we keep his sabbaths, obey kings, (his substitutes,) respect ministers, (his messengers,) love his people, and inviolably preserve all consecrated things ; and finally, when we demean ourselves towards God and all that is his, as may suit so great a Majesty and so gracious a Father. And further we must be careful, since we are called by the name of Christ, that we do not profane that holy name, 2 Tim. ii. 19, by wicked lives, but strive to shew our reverence and admiration of so holy a name<sup>u</sup> by becoming holy, and by separating from all sin, as his name is separated from all pollution ; it becomes us who are honoured with his name, in

<sup>t</sup> Rom. i. 19. Gr. τὸ γνωστὸν Θεοῦ.

<sup>u</sup> Sanctificetur nomen tuum per opera nostra.—Quocunque tempore facimus quod bonum et

rectum est, sanctificamus nomen ejus magnum. Drus. (e libro Musar,) in Matt. vi. Ἀγιάζειν λέγουται Θεὸν οἱ ζῶντες ὁρθῶς. Cyril. Alex.

whatever we do, or speak, or think, to be careful (that by defiling and abusing ourselves) we cast not dishonour on him that hath condescended to such a relation. O let us beware we do nothing wilfully to occasion religion to be slandered by the enemies thereof, for otherwise our lives will be a contradiction to our prayers.

- 59 §. V. THY KINGDOM COME] It is the observation of every good man, that although God is, and ever shall be a glorious King<sup>x</sup>, whatever become of this lower world; yet the devils hate him, wicked men rebel against him, and the better sort do not fully submit to him; while the great King of kings seems to connive at it, seldom exercising his power to subdue, or his justice to punish and destroy his enemies, so that the whole world abounds with impiety and confusion; and then what wonder if the children of God, who know their Father's power and goodness, do earnestly desire he may more visibly reign among them, for his glory and their own good, yea, for the benefit of all the world; for his kingdom is *regimen paternum*, and consequently it is our interest<sup>y</sup> and our happiness, and therefore our prayer; for when our heavenly Father doth thus exercise his authority, then his faithful servants shall be secured from their enemies, supplied in all their needs, and satisfied in all their desires. Now the *kingdom of God* or *heaven*<sup>z</sup>, signifies either his kingdom of grace, or that of glory. 1. His kingdom of grace we pray may come in a double sense, 1. by an outward profession, viz. that the gospel may be embraced by all the world, even by those who now are slaves to the Devil and their own

<sup>x</sup> Psal. x. 16, et Psal. xxix.  
10. In diluvium Deus sedit,  
h. e. perditis omnibus creaturis,  
tamen regnum ejus manet. RR.

<sup>y</sup> Illi deputamus quod ab illo  
expectamus. Tertul.

<sup>z</sup> Vide supra, sect. I. §. 6.

lusts, by those who are servants to the prince of darkness, Ephes. ii. 2, doing his work, observing his laws, and paying to him the tribute of sacrifices, as to their liege Lord. We pray that these poor souls may be converted, believe, and be baptized, renouncing their old master, and professing themselves subjects of Jesus, and of the great King of all the world. 2. We pray his kingdom of grace may come by a real subjection where his sovereignty is owned; because, without this an outward profession is but like the mockery of the cruel Jews, who saluted him *Hail King*, and then smote him on the face, and so doth every professed Christian that lives wickedly. Wherefore we pray that his kingdom may be within us as well as among us, Luke xvii. 21; and whereas now his laws are broken, his messengers despised, his people abused, and his enemies cherished; that by the power of his grace in all our hearts, our unruly passions may be tamed, our rebellious lusts mortified, and our naughty desires extinguished, till we all own his authority, fear his displeasure, and obey his edicts as we ought to do; and if any be so obstinate as still to refuse him for their king, Luke xix. 14, we pray that our Lord Jesus would exercise his royal power in punishing all such, that others may see and fear, Psalm lviii. ult. Every good man desires for himself that this righteous Prince, Psalm xlv. 6, may subdue every opposing thought in his heart, 2 Cor. x. 5, and may have the absolute command over all the members of his body and faculties of his soul; and then he hopes his corruptions will be restrained, his graces quickened, and his whole soul in much better order; he knows if Christ rule in his heart he shall have more freedom, comfort, and peace, than ever he had before. It were happy for the Christian world, and every truly pious soul, if our Father's kingdom were set up in all our

hearts, since we all own it with our mouths, *Lord, let thy kingdom of grace thus come.* Secondly, the children of God pray for his kingdom of glory, viz. for that visible and glorious manifestation of the kingdom of Jesus, when he shall come to dispense a final pardon to his faithful servants, to admit them to be sharers in his joy, and partners in his kingdom, and to pronounce the fearful doom upon his obstinate and miserable enemies, to make them suffer the just deserts of their wilful opposition and desperate rebellion, in inexpressible and eternal torments. In which acts the glory of his kingdom, the mightiness of his power, the truth of his word, the infiniteness of his love to his own, and the exactness of his justice to his enemies, shall be so clearly demonstrated to all the world, that his faithful ones shall be rapt with joy and wonder, and glorify him for it to all eternity. Here, alas! they serve, there they shall reign; here they are despised and afflicted, vexed with their own corruptions, grieved for the sins of others, poor and disconsolate, full of cares and fears, which when Christ's kingdom comes, shall not only be done away, but exchanged for endless glory and boundless felicity. And who can blame them who are weary with slavery<sup>a</sup> to wish for liberty, and long for that happy day which is the end of all their evils, and the  
 60 beginning of that incomparable joy that never shall have end. Let ungodly persons fear and tremble at this dreadful day to them; let their tongue falter when they wish for it and their own confusion. The holy ones of God can join with their brethren under the altar in saying, *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*; the sooner he comes, the sooner shall their souls be deli-

<sup>a</sup> Optamus maturius regnare, Christianorum, confusio nationum diutius servire. Tert. de Regnum Dei — Votum exultatio angelorum. Idem, ibid.

vered, and their desires satisfied in seeing and enjoying their Lord and dear Redeemer. It is true, when good men consider how dreadful vengeance will then seize on sinners, out of pity to them that pity not themselves, they pray that these desperate sinners may first submit to his kingdom of grace, they are well pleased with the deferring of that day<sup>b</sup>, and can pray with the primitive Christians for the putting that time further off, though it be to their own loss, because so God will be more glorified, heaven's choir fuller, and the music sweeter, the more are brought home; therefore they pray, that though the kingdom of glory be their happiness, yet the kingdom of grace may first come into the hearts of all that will receive it.

§. VI. THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN] As God's kingdom doth always abide, so his will is ever done; and so it may seem superfluous to request it may be done, because it is the rule by which all creatures act, and they all do bring about his will, Psalm cxv. 3. Rom. ix. 19, when they intend it, and when they do not; and God himself always doth his own will<sup>c</sup>, which is the limit of his infinite power; for he can do and doth what he will; and thus we had sufficiently asked it before in *thy kingdom come*, because this is the property<sup>d</sup> of such a king, to do what he pleases. But as God's kingdom is scarce visible upon earth, so neither is the accomplishment of his will; for those that renounce his authority become lords (Psalm xii. 4.) to themselves, and do their own will, even where it displeaseth God, and though his will be at last done upon them in their final ruin; yet this is not so properly his will, not (*voluntas beneplaciti*) his pleasure;

<sup>b</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 9. Pro mora finis. posse velle. Tertul. in Prax.  
Tert. ibid. <sup>d</sup> Ποιῶν ἃ βούλεται ἀνευθύνως.  
<sup>c</sup> Deo non posse nolle est, et Herodot.

as the malefactor doth not his prince's will when he suffers death by his laws for a capital crime; because he that made that punishment did appoint it to terrify from the crime, and it was not his intention any should suffer by it. So it is the will of God that all men should live holily here, 1 Thess. iv. 3, and happily hereafter<sup>e</sup>; yet if any will be wicked, it is also his will they shall suffer for it; but then his will is not so properly done on them that suffer, but only upon supposition they were obstinate sinners, which he would not have had them to be. Wherefore we pray that his first and principal will may be done in the conversion and salvation of all men. And having lately viewed the upper part of his kingdom, where they are ever happy by a full and free obedience to his heavenly will, we wish and desire that this lower part of his kingdom, (where so many are yet totally in rebellion, and others frequently revolting, though they do profess subjection,) even that this world were modelled by that heavenly pattern<sup>f</sup>, as exactly as is consistent with the frailty and mutability of such a state; for it is easy to discern, that all the miseries in this world spring from our disobedience to the laws, and our acting contrary to the will of God; so that if the corrupt affections of the better sort were subdued, and the evil actions of the more impious did cease, and all did guide their ways by the will of God, we might be very happy even in this world, and should begin our heaven upon earth; wherefore we also pray, since it is God's will for all to live holily<sup>g</sup>, that this will of his may be accomplished; and consi-

<sup>e</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 4. Ut salvi simus in cœlis et in terris, quia summa est voluntatis ejus, salus eorum quos adoptavit. Tertul. ut supr.

<sup>f</sup> Εἰκὼν δὲ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ Ἐκκλησίας ἡ ἐπίγειος, ὅπερ εὐχόμεθα καὶ

ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς γένεσθαι τὸ θέλημα. Clem. Alex. Strom. 4.

<sup>g</sup> Quid autem Deus vult quam incedere nos secundum suam disciplinam? Tertul.

dering our heavenly Father hath innumerable blessed spirits to perform his will, which do it cheerfully and readily, fully and constantly; we see how much our endeavours come short of them, and how little reason we have to be puffed up for our imperfect duties, which are begun with reluctancy, deferred by sloth, or interrupted by vanity, carried on heavily, shaken with fears, and sometimes broken off by sin. This prospect may humble us while we behold the angels flying on the wings of love and zeal, and ourselves creeping by fears and uncertainties; and if it do trouble us that we can do the will of so great and good a Master in no better manner, then we shall strive and pray that we may know God's will as fully, desire to do it as fervently, and be enabled to accomplish it as pleasantly and as constantly, as the glorious hosts of heaven do, the stars in the lower orbs which exactly observe the laws of<sup>61</sup> their creation<sup>h</sup>, and those glorious angels and blessed spirits which in the regions of bliss do delight continually to serve him. O what affections are vigorous enough to pray for the same obedience and unity, consent and uniformity among God's children, as is there above! where every one moves in his own place without disturbance, thwarting, or opposition, making perfect harmony, and keeping exact peace; and this is God's will. But the word *be done* seems to others to have a passive signification, viz. that whatever happens to us or any by the will of God, whether good or evil, it may not be displeasing to us. And this further shews why we prayed his kingdom might come, that so he may administer all things as he pleaseth; for we are

<sup>h</sup> — Sicut caelestia semper Inconcussa suo voluntur sidera motu. Ὅπως ὥς αἱ ἐπουράνιοι φύσεις πᾶσαι δοξάζουσιν τὸν Θεόν συμ-

φώνως, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐν ἑνὶ στόματι καὶ μῇ διαθέσει δοξάζωσι τὸν μόνον Θεόν. Clem. Constit. lib. 2. cap. 56.



not jealous (as the subjects of earthly princes sometimes are) lest our God should make his will an arbitrary law; for his holiness and mercy, truth and justice, are his will; so that we are most sure, whatever is his will, that is best for us, be it judgment or mercy, plenty or want, health or sickness, life or death; it is the best for us, whether we apprehend it or no, and we ought to wish it may be done, because we know he wills no evil to us<sup>i</sup>; and if something which we think ill descends from him, we might say as Melito did to the emperor about the persecution<sup>k</sup>, "If thou commandest them they are good, because enjoined by a just authority." Surely, though it may seem hard at present, it is judged fittest for us by him that knows our temper and need. The author of this prayer learned submission, Matt. xxvi. 42, and illustrated this petition by his own example, and so did also St. Paul<sup>l</sup>. To murmur against God's choice was forbidden by a heathen, and is so impious and foolish, that it wisheth God out of his throne, and the reins out of his hands, that we might sit there, and rule all things by our own will, as if we wished our former petition unsaid. Sure we must not only cease to be Christians, but sober men, before we can fancy ourselves wiser to contrive, and fitter to dispense all things than God himself is. Socrates his prayer was for what was convenient, not what he might desire<sup>m</sup>, that is plainly, that God's will might be done. If we were our own carvers, we should through rash-

<sup>i</sup> — Eo nobis bene optamus quod nihil mali sit in Dei voluntate. Tert.

<sup>k</sup> Si quidem te jubente hoc faciunt, bonum credamus, quicquid justo imperatore jubente committitur. Euseb. lib. 4. Hist. Eccl. cap. 25.— In hoc dicto ad sufferentiam nos ipsos admo-

nemus. Tert.

<sup>l</sup> Acts xxi. 14. Μὴ ἀντιτείνειν καὶ προσαγανάκειν τῇ θείᾳ προνοίᾳ. Pythag.

<sup>m</sup> Μὴ μοι γένοιτο ἃ βούλομαι ἀλλὰ ἃ συμφέρει. Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris. Juven. X. 347.

ness and folly, passion and prejudice, ever choose the worst: so that (having such experience of our mistakes) Jesus teacheth us to desire of God to order us as he pleases; and if we can live this petition, believing the pleasure of God to be always best, we shall have comfort in all conditions, and shall glorify God more by such noble opinions of his wisdom and power, of his love and mercy, than by *whole burnt-offerings and rivers of oil*: for he that can thus fully acquiesce in God's disposal of all things must needs believe him to be supreme and almighty, of infinite wisdom, goodness, and mercy. And for this the angels are our examples, who keep those stations, and do those offices God appoints them, and not what they choose for themselves; and so are all those glorified saints above, from whom we may learn that the will of God is to make us eternally happy at last. And why should we not give him leave to accommodate us by the way as he pleaseth, and in such manner as may bring us safest to our blessed brethren now in glory?

§. VII. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD,] Having thus sought the kingdom of God in the first place, we now proceed to beg a supply for our bodily necessities; for our Saviour, who commanded us, Matt. vi. 31, to seek that kingdom first, hath placed it first<sup>n</sup> in his form of prayer, because that which is for God's glory is also for the good of our nobler part<sup>o</sup> the soul, and because the grace of God is more necessary and beneficial than our bodily food, therefore we pray for these first. Yet when we have prayed for spiritual things, we that are flesh and not spirit are forced to beg temporal things also. We have declared that we do in all things sub-

<sup>n</sup> — Post cœlestia, i. e. Post petitioni locum facit. Ter.  
 Dei nomen, voluntatem, regnum;      <sup>o</sup> — Pars hæc pretium corpore  
 terrenis quoque necessitatibus majus habet.

mit to his blessed will, only we crave that which we cannot subsist without; we desire to do his will, and observe his pleasure as exactly as the blessed angels in 62 heaven; but as he does not expect<sup>p</sup> we should live like them without food, so we may desire him to remember the difference of our natures, and give us *our daily bread*, which is so necessary for us in this frail estate, that we cannot do his will without it. If this petition had been wanting, this prayer had been deficient; nor is there any need for the ancient doctors<sup>q</sup> to allegorize this phrase, as if we asked *Christ the bread of life*, and the communication of him in the sacrament, for the food of our souls; for though I can admit this may be understood by way of allusion<sup>r</sup>, yet I cannot allow it as the principal sense; nor is it below us to ask that which God knows we cannot be without. By *bread* then we understand all manner of food, meat or drink<sup>s</sup>, which is necessary for the preservation of life, and also (1 Tim. vi. 8.) whatever is required to support our frail nature, (which the Roman laws comprehended under one word, *victus*,) viz. food and raiment and shelter; for the shortness of this form doth by one word, *bread*, express the supply of all our outward wants, as of life and health, safety and success in our honest callings, riches and friends, as far as we need them, and as God shall see us fit for them. The things we here pray for are temporal, yet if we say this petition aright, we exercise many graces; for by desiring him to give, we own his providence, and acknowledge

<sup>p</sup> Conversationis quidem diligentiam eandem a vobis efflagito, non tamen impassibilitatem requiro. Chrys. in Mat. Hom. 20.

<sup>q</sup> Vide Hier. in Matt. l. 1. et Tit. cap. 2. et Cassian. coll. 9. ut et Tertull. et Cypr. &c.

<sup>r</sup> Πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐσίῳ δύο καθίσταται — καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὸν ἐφ' ἐκάστη οὐσίᾳ πρέποντα ἄρτον αἰτοῦμεν. Athan.

<sup>s</sup> Ita panis significat, Numb. xv. 9. Prov. xxiii. 6. Ezek. iv. 16, &c.

that he is the Fountain of all good things, and that our labours are ineffectual without his blessing; we confess his wisdom in leaving it to him, to give so much as he knows we need, or shall be pleased to dispense. We declare that we are persuaded of his all-sufficiency and bounty, and therefore we desire not to have our portion all at once, or in our own hands<sup>t</sup>, lest we should be too lavish of it; but that he may be the storehouse of all good things, and that we may every day resort to him, of whose love and liberality we do not doubt, and who we know will be as able to relieve us to-morrow as he is to-day. We disclaim all unreasonable cares and fears concerning what shall become of us hereafter, Matt. vi. 33, 34, because our heavenly Father, that hath all things at his disposal, will daily take care of us; and as the Israelites went every day to gather manna, Exod. xvi. 4, that no day might pass without a memento of God's providence; so are we willing to come to him day by day, to keep our hearts free from unreasonable cares, (which hinder us in seeking better things,) and to make us daily mindful of our constant dependence upon him. Here we express also the moderation of our desires, not seeking riches or honours<sup>u</sup>, jewels or ornaments, banquets or voluptuous satisfactions, but only so much as is convenient<sup>x</sup> for the condition we are in, Judges viii. 20, and necessary to strengthen us to do the will of God: if we have not food and raiment, the body cannot minister to the soul in duties of religion<sup>y</sup>; so much therefore we crave, but not more, lest it should not help<sup>z</sup>, but hinder; not

<sup>t</sup> ἵνα μὴ ἐαυτὴν φύλακα τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἀλλὰ τὸν φιλόδοξον ἀποφήνῃ. Philo. non περιούσιος.

<sup>u</sup> Panem peti mandat quod solum fidelibus necessarium est, cætera nationes requirunt. Tert.

<sup>x</sup> Prov. xxx. 6. Ἐπιούσιος,

<sup>y</sup> Δίμψ γὰρ οὐκ εἶδεν ἡ ἀρετὴ συνοικίεσθαι. Procop. Goth. 4.

<sup>z</sup> Ἰσχυρότερον μὲν τὸν δεσμόν, αὐτὸν δὲ ἀργότερον πρὸς τὰ οἰκεία καὶ ἀσθενέστερον. Porphyg. περὶ ἀποχ. lib. 1. §. 46.

strengthen, but weaken us to all good. We ask not these out of any love to them, but merely out of a sense of our need: nay, it is evident our chiefest care is about spiritual things; for we ask them first and indefinitely, as much as we can get, even to serve us to eternity; but (having no abiding place here) we desire no more of these but necessities in our journey, we provide only from hand to mouth, (being as the Greeks phrase it *καθημερόβιοι*,) for it is a foolish thing to load ourselves with much provision in our inn, where we know not whether we shall stay one night. We only ask from day to day, that we may always shew our readiness to depart whenever God shall call us; for too much plenty makes us unwilling to die. Herein we vindicate ourselves also from sloth and injustice; because we pray for our own bread, that is, that which we shall get by God's blessing on our honest labour; for a good man will (not, like an idle drone, prey upon others' labours, but) earn and eat his own bread, 2 Thess. iii. 12, and had rather want it than tear it from others by violence, oppression, sacrilege, or rebellion, or rather than he would by fraud or flattery, lying or cheating, deceive his neighbour of what is justly his. If any here object, Many rich men have goods laid up for many years, and need not ask their *daily bread*; I answer, The rich need God's blessing, to prosper and preserve what they have, as well as the poor, to give them what they have not; nor can their meat nourish them, Matt. iv. 4, their garments warm them, or their palaces defend them, without his blessing. What one hath more than another is here confessed to be the gift of God; and Christ teacheth the rich humility by shewing them whence their abundance came, and by whom it is continued; and lest they should despise the poor, they learn that if God with-

draw his blessing, they will soon become both alike; wherefore he that hath, as well as he that hath not, must every day on his knees beg a piece of bread, or a power to use it, and a blessing upon it. And thus we have begun to pray for ourselves; and Jesus teacheth us to begin at the lowest step, and first to ask relief for our bodies, assuring us that our heavenly Father cannot hear his children cry for bread and not supply them; and when he hath done so, we may from his kindness in lesser things be encouraged to ask for our souls, which he is more concerned for; but it would seem presumption for us to ask the greatest first who do not deserve the least, Gen. xxxii. 10.

§. VIII. AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US] The particle *and* connects this to the former petition, and declares we are continuing those requests which concern ourselves; for we must look further than our earthly needs, lest if we obtain a supply for them from his bounty, and do not procure a pardon from his<sup>a</sup> mercy, our food should only fat us for the slaughter. If we did rightly apprehend the danger of our souls, all the enjoyments of this life could yield no more pleasure to us, than the curious fare presented to that Persian captive, (designed to be sacrificed,) when he remembered the knife and the altar. The fears of God's eternal vengeance will embitter all our abundance, and therefore we add a prayer for forgiveness, without which we cannot relish *our daily bread*; nor do we think our food so necessary as the remission of our offences; the want of that could but bring us to a temporal death, but without this we shall lose everlasting life, and die

<sup>a</sup> Consequens erat ut observata Dei liberalitate, et clementiam ejus precaremur; quid enim

alimenta proderunt, si illi reputamur revera quasi taurus ad victimam? Tertul.

in eternal misery. And the necessity is also universal; for as no man can live without bread, so no man can live comfortably here, or happily hereafter, without mercy; for all men have sinned<sup>b</sup>, and those sins cannot be done away without mercy; which every man that lives by bread must pray for, even the best of men; and as often as they pray for bread (even every day) they must also ask pardon of Almighty God, because no day is wholly without offences. Our Lord Jesus here sets our sinfulness daily before our eyes, to make us constantly sensible that we are unworthy of the meat we eat, and of all the outward blessings which we receive, and to make us continually humble and penitent. He knew that even the best of men had sin, and prescribes this petition as daily useful to all his disciples; and those who out of ignorance or pride think they have no sin, do exclude themselves out of the number of his scholars, who have all learned to pray for absolution. But to be more particular, let us observe how many duties are exercised in these few words, even all that becomes the address of a true penitent; confession and self-accusation—contrition for and aggravation of his sins—deprecation of the punishment, with acknowledgment of the justice thereof—faith in a Redeemer, and hope in his merits. First, we herein daily confess our sin; our very asking pardon is an acknowledgment we are guilty, and we appropriate them to ourselves<sup>c</sup>; for though Jesus did suffer the punishment, we acted the crimes; which here (being mindful of his bitter passion) we do own with sorrow, calling them *our trespasses*; and in that word we signify the vast number of our transgressions: this plural indefinite

<sup>b</sup> Rom. iii. 23. Sciebat Dominus se solum sine delicto esse, Tertul.

<sup>c</sup> Exomologesis est petitio veniæ, qui petit veniam delictum confitetur. Tertul. de Orat.

word declares them very many, which we have committed against God and our neighbour; not against one, but against all his laws; not once, but many times. And further we confess they are as heinous as numerous, viz. trespasses and injuries done against God himself by us his poor creatures, 1 Sam. ii. 25, either in his own person, or in his subjects, (our neighbours,) of whose rights he is the protector, and the avenger of their wrongs; we have broke down the hedge of God's laws by our disobedience, disowning his supremacy, and denying that duty which we owe to him, whereupon sins are called *debts*<sup>d</sup>, because God being our 64 supreme Lord, Creator, and Preserver, we are bound to obey all his pleasure, and to do his commands; specially having voluntarily promised this in our baptism: wherefore, if we pay not God this due and vowed obedience, we are debtors to him, and must discharge and satisfy by suffering the penalty<sup>e</sup>, unless we can find a surety to undertake for us. O what can set out the heinousness of sin more lively! It is a wrong and injury done by us poor miserable wretches, against the laws, the authority, and the rights of that God who made us, and whose covenant-servants we are; and to this we must add, that we are liable to his just and severe threatenings, and may (when God pleases) be summoned to his bar, indicted for this debt, nay, condemned to eternal torments for the satisfaction of it; but behold his mercy and wisdom hath found a gracious Redeemer, who hath taken these trespasses upon himself,

<sup>d</sup> Matt. vi. 12. ὀφειλήματα, the same, Luke xi. 4. τὰς ἁμαρτίας. Confer Luc. xiii. 2. cum ver. 4. τὰ ἁμαρτήματα εἰς ὀφειλήματα ἀναγράφεται. Chrysost. de Pœn. 2. Debitum in scripturis delicti figura est, quod perinde

judicio debeatur, nec evadat justitiam exactionis nisi donetur exactio. Tert. ut supra.

<sup>e</sup> Si non reddit faciendo justitiam, reddet patiendo miseriam. August.



and made a fuller satisfaction for them than we could have done by eternal sufferings. It must be supposed we believe the satisfaction of Christ's death, and by it hope for a remission; or else what encouragement have we to ask pardon or confess a debt to a just and true God that must have satisfaction? This were to ask impossibilities, to desire God to be unjust. But our Lord Jesus, who paid our scores, hath sent us to his Father with these words in our mouths, and he calls them truly *our trespasses*; to shew his love in redeeming us, and God's mercy in forgiving us, not to make us fear them as unpardonable: for when we remember our Redeemer, we have lively hopes in the midst of our humble acknowledgments; because he that paid our debts makes the same request in heaven for us, viz. that God would clear us and charge our iniquities upon him. But because we are so apt to remember our needs and forget our duty, to pray for good things to ourselves, and neglect the doing them to others, our Master hath annexed one of the greatest duties of the gospel so close to this necessary and desirable request, that we cannot ask forgiveness of God, but we must promise the same to our neighbours, that so Christ may make peace in earth as well as heaven: We must declare, not only that we lay aside our groundless prejudices against our brethren, but that we quit all pretences of malice or revenge, even against those who have not paid us the returns of love and duty which they were obliged to, and against our very enemies that have wronged and harmed us by thought, word, or deeds. Not that our pardon from God depends only upon this, or is merited by it; but because it is most reasonable, that we, who request forgiveness of our offences against God, should forgive the lesser debts of our brethren to us, which are fewer in number, smaller

in value, committed against a meaner person, and commonly upon some provocation on our part<sup>f</sup>. He that doth so strictly exact his due in these petty injuries, deserves to be strictly accounted with himself, and may blush to ask of so great a God to abate of his rigour, when he a mortal creature will not do it to his equal. How can such a malicious person be sensible of the kindness which God sheweth in forgiving him, when he is a stranger to those compassions? Such a man's person must be hateful to our heavenly Father, because he is so unlike him<sup>g</sup>; and his request must be odious to him, because it is unreasonable and impudent. Wherefore take ye heed, lest by your malice and uncharitableness you bring upon yourselves the wrath of God for your own greater injuries and offences.

§. IX. AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL] Temptation doth not in its prime sense in scripture signify a solicitation to evil, but any kind of trial<sup>h</sup>, in order to the discovery of what we are; whether it be done by a friend, as when God tempted Abraham, Gen. xxii. 1, (or glorified him, as some read,) with a design to manifest the strength of his faith; or by an enemy, as when Satan desired to sift St. Peter, James i. 13, not to purify him, but to manifest that mixture of chaff he could find in him; and because evil objects shew what we are, and declare us to be evil if we comply with them; therefore the setting evil things 65

<sup>f</sup> Veniam det facile cui venia est opus. Eccclus. xxviii. 3. Matt. xviii. 24. ubi domino debentur 10000 talenta, h. e. 1,870,500*l*. nostræmonetæ; servo autem tantum 100 denaria, h. e. 3*l*. 2*s*. 6*d*. Vidend. Waserus de nummis, in Crit. Sacr.

<sup>g</sup> Matt. v. 4, 5. Ὑποὶ αἰ. lib. ὅμοιοι. Grot. Ὅστις οὖν ἐοικέναι

βούλεται τοῖς, ἀφ' οὗς τιμωρίας χαίρειν μᾶλλον ἢ λαμβάνων. Libanius Sophist.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Heb. xi. 29. and is expressed both by δοκιμάζειν and πειράζειν. Dux sunt tentationes, una quæ decipit, altera quæ probat; secundum eam quæ decipit, Deus neminem tentat, Aug. Tract. 43.

before us to draw us into sin, is also called *temptation*; but God never tempts thus; he may try us by afflictions, and put us in the fire as gold, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7, to separate us from our dross, nay, he will do it, Zech. xiii. 9, and it is a sign of his love, Heb. xii. 6, and ought to be a cause of our joy, James i. 2, and David begs it as a favour, Psalm cxxxix. 23. Nor do any but cheats and hypocrites fly this trial, or fear to be inquired into: God's children are willing their Father should try them and tempt them here, with intentions of mercy, so they may escape the severe trial before the last tribunal. As to these trials and temptations, Christ would rather teach us to pray to be supported under, and carried through them, than never to be led into them; because if God's grace be with us, they may be for our advantage and honour, and his glory. Wherefore by temptation here, we are rather to understand the being enticed to commit sin, or however a trying whether we will sin; and thus it well follows the former petition<sup>i</sup>; for having considered the heinous nature and dangerous consequents of former sins, we prayed for the forgiveness of them; and if that prayer were real, we cannot but desire we may never fall into such desperate circumstances again: and to quicken this request, let us consider that our enemies are many and mighty, vigilant and politic, that we are naturally easy and willing to be deceived, rash in our choices, heedless of danger, neither considering before nor examining afterwards, and so shall certainly fall every moment, if God in mercy do not help us. Yet if we be humble and fear, and heartily call for aid against sin<sup>k</sup>, (although we

<sup>i</sup> Ut non de remittendis tantum, sed etiam de avertendis in totum delictis supplicaremus. Tertul. de orat. Illud ut præter-

ita expientur, hoc ut futura vitentur. Oros. de lib. arbit.

<sup>k</sup> Τί οὖν δυνατόν; ἀναμάρτητον ἤδη εἶναι; ἀμύχανον. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο

should fall sometimes,) we declare our hatred of it, and if we be not totally free, yet we manifest a desire to be free from it; and for this we rely not on our own strength, but as Jesus hath taught us, we humbly beg strength from heaven every day against it. But some may wonder why we desire God would *not lead us*, &c. Sure he that hates sin so perfectly, and so lately forgave us, will not tempt us to commit more, James i. 13. It is most true, Satan is the tempter<sup>1</sup> (and so his name Sathan in Hebrew signifies); he being miserable by sin<sup>m</sup>, desires to make men partners with him both in sin and misery, by working on those lusts, James i. 14, which do draw us into sin. But the Devil himself is under the command of the Almighty, who sets him bounds that he cannot pass, and gives permission to him to tempt us<sup>n</sup>: so that he could have no power against us, except it were given him from on high, John xix. 11; but he obtains leave from God sometimes to try us; and Christ was led, Matt. iv. 1, by the Spirit of God *to be tempted of the Devil*. In such a case, our frailty might make us fear, and pray that we might not fall by such a trial. But other times God, in his displeasure for one sin, suffers us to fall into another; not by enticing us, but by withholding that grace which should restrain our evil desires, and by loosing Satan's chain, and leaving us encompassed with opportunities and engaging circumstances, which we are likely to fall by; and this the scripture phraseth *entering into temptation*<sup>o</sup>, and the Jews in their forms call it, being led into the

δυνατὸν πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἀμαρτάνειν τε-  
τασθαι διηγουμένως. Arrian. lib. 4.  
cap. 21.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv. 3.

<sup>m</sup> Solatium perditionis suæ  
perdendis hominibus operatur.  
Lactant. de Orig. Er.

<sup>n</sup> Job i. 12. Ch. Par. Exiit  
Sathanas cum licentia a coram  
Domino.

<sup>o</sup> Matt. xxvi. 44. Ne me in-  
ducas in manum peccati, nec in  
manum transgressionis. Seder  
Tephil. Lusitan.

hand of temptation or sin. And now let us remember how often by one sin, and desires after more, we have provoked God to expose us to such circumstances as will infallibly bring us into some grievous transgression; but if we henceforth take God for our guide, he will direct us, and lead us in the right way; he foresees the enticing baits, the evil objects, and wicked company, which are in ambush for us; and if we rely on his mercy, and follow his guidance, he will conduct us so as to miss them all, or give us strength to overcome them, though we have neither wisdom to discover, nor strength of our own to avoid the danger. Wherefore we pray him to lead us, who can restrain the powers of darkness, and desire we may not provoke him to lead us into evil circumstances and dangerous occasions, nor to let loose our infernal foes, nor yet to leave us to ourselves, which is the prime intent of this petition in its first branch. As to the last clause of *deliverance from evil*, Tertullian and many others take it to be a fuller explication of the former<sup>p</sup>, and by *evil* understand the evil of sin; as if we were not unwilling to be tempted by afflictions or solicitations, if it be our Father's pleasure; 66 provided he would by his grace prevent us from sinning and falling into iniquity by them. Temptations and trials, if they occasion not our sin, may humble us, and quicken our prayers, mortify our lusts, and exercise all our graces; and therefore we only desire, whether God or Satan (by his permission) try us, we may be innocent; or with the ancients we may take the word *πονηροῦ* for the *evil one*, that is, the Devil, who is so called in scripture<sup>q</sup>, and thus we shall avoid a repe-

<sup>p</sup> Et respondet clausula interpretans quid sit Ne inducas, hoc est enim, sed devehe nos a malo. De Orat.

<sup>q</sup> 1 John iii. 12, Ephes. vi. 16,

Matt. v. 3. Castal. a diabolo. Tertul. a maligno. Πονηρὸν ἐνταῦθα τὸν διάβολον καλεῖ, κελεύει ἡμᾶς ἀσπονδοῦν πρὸς αὐτὸν πόλεμον. Chrys.

tition, (which cannot be supposed in this compendious form,) and the sense will be, that God would not deliver us up to sin, lest our enemy the Devil, taking advantage thereby, seize our hearts, when God hath abandoned them, and we becoming his slaves, should be forfeit to destruction. Or lastly, we may by *evil* understand the effect of sin, the evil of punishment; viz. that we may not be drawn into any wickedness, nor into that which certainly follows it, sickness, losses, crosses, death temporal and eternal, which are the wages of sin, and of which the Devil is the executioner; so that the two last senses may very well stand together; viz. that God would not put us out of his protection, nor deliver us up into Satan's power, neither as a tempter first, to entice to sin, nor as a tormentor afterward, to execute and inflict upon us what those sins deserve in this world or the world to come. The sum is, that sin is a dreadful thing; it gives Satan power over us, and possession of us; it makes us liable to be hurried on to more wickedness by banishing God's Holy Spirit; and by taking away his favour, it opens a way for all the miseries and mischiefs of this world and the next to fall upon us. Upon the serious consideration whereof, we not only crave the remission of past sins, but earnestly beg that we may never more fall into the like transgressions, and then we doubt not but to be safe from all evils, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

¶ X. FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER AND EVER, AMEN.] Some have imagined this conclusion was not spoken by Christ, but added by the Greek church to this prayer, because all the old Latin copies want it wholly; and all the Greek copies in St. Luke, and some in St. Matthew, nor is it expounded by the Latin fathers; others plead it is agreeable to the Jewish forms, and generally found

in the original of one evangelist, and in the Syriac and Arabic, both ancient translations, and is expounded by St. Chrysostom and Theophylact. But our church hath chosen a middle way, and hath annexed it here in the first repetition of the Lord's Prayer, and in some other places she hath omitted it, not as if it were not of Divine authority, but sometimes following St. Luke, as here, and elsewhere St. Matthew. It is very unlikely those holy fathers should presume to add their own inventions to this venerable form of Christ's own composure: it being more probable, that our Lord delivering this prayer twice, did add this doxology at the first time, which is recorded in St. Matthew, and leave it out the second, which is set down in St. Luke; and hence the Latin copies (which were very confused and full of error) might leave it out in both, lest the evangelists should seem to differ in so considerable a matter. But however it was, it is most for our profit to wave these inquiries, and labour truly to understand it. It is known that the Jews concluded all their prayers with a doxology or form of praise, yea, sometimes (as Drusus saith) in these very words<sup>r</sup>, and our Lord Jesus delighted in imitating their customs; though here the reason is weighty; for a prayer is scarce complete without praises<sup>s</sup>, it being sordid to ask all from God, and return nothing to him. Prayers may seem more necessary, but praises are as much our duty, and more lovely. Petitions fit the earth, but the glorifying God is the imitation of the celestial choir, who sing a song much like this conclusion of the Lord's Prayer<sup>t</sup>, and we do

<sup>r</sup> In Matt. vi. 13. Quia tuum est regnum, et in secula seculorum regnabis gloriose.

<sup>s</sup> Phil. iv. 6. — with thanksgiving.

<sup>t</sup> Rev. v. 12, 13, and xi. 15.

— Nos angelorum — candidati jam hinc cœlestem illam vocem in Deum, et officium futuræ claritatis ediscimus. Tertul. de Orat.

well to learn it here, against we come to use it there. We began these devotions with his glory, and now we end with it, that this may be the beginning and end of all our actions<sup>u</sup>: we now give that to him ourselves which we prayed before might be offered him from others. As to the sense of these words, they may be an acknowledgment of his infinite perfections, who is not praised by flattery, but by a bare confession of what he really is and hath, in, by, and from himself; yea, we fall short of what he is and deserves, in our most exact acknowledgments; for his kingdom is ever-67 lasting and universal, his power infinite and unlimited, his glory transcendent and incomprehensible; we may repeat them, but can neither fully comprehend them, nor express them but by silence and admiration; only we confess our own subjection, weakness, and misery, by ascribing the *kingdom, power, and glory* to him; kings must lay down their crowns, mighty men their strength, and the honourable men of the earth their glory, at his footstool. These words, considered in themselves thus, are an act of praise; but being connected to the Prayer by the particle *for*, they are a proper conclusion to this divine Prayer, and seem to contain a reason of every petition; for we are obliged to pray that his kingdom may come, because he is the right and lawful king of heaven and earth; and to desire his will may be done, because he hath the just power and supremacy over all, to command what he pleaseth; and to wish his name may be hallowed, because he is glorious in himself, and deserves all possible praises from all the world. So likewise in the three last petitions, of him we ask for a temporal supply, because his is the kingdom over all creatures, and all provisions are his;

<sup>u</sup> Rom. xi. 36. Horat. Od. lib. iii. od. 6. Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum.



of him we beg a pardon, for he only hath full power and just authority to dispense it; and of him, lastly, we request deliverance from sin and damnation, because he may have the same glory from us as he now hath and ever shall have from the blessed saints, whom he hath brought to his heavenly kingdom; or if this seem too nice, and we reflect upon the whole prayer together, here we are struck with reverence in remembrance of that great King we have spoken to; we declare why we make our address to him, and what ground we have to hope for acceptance with him. His is the kingdom; therefore we his poor subjects do petition him: and it is his prerogative to help, and by his supremacy he may do it. His is the power; therefore we his weak impotent creatures look up to him and rely upon him, who is able to do all we desire, and being Almighty can perform it. His is the glory; and therefore we vile sinners, that can do nothing without him, though we deserve nothing from him, yet we present our necessities before him, that by his free grace he may have that glory from us which he hath from all others that he hath formerly relieved. Leave thy prayers then with much comfort in his hands, who is thy heavenly Father, and may do abundantly for thee by his right, and can do it by his power, and will do it for his glory, both this day, to-morrow, and for ever. Come when thou wilt, he is, and hath *kingdom, power, and glory*, from everlasting to everlasting; this is no mortal king, nor fading power, nor transient glory, but all endure longer than thy wants, even *for ever and ever*. O how hearty an Amen mayest thou say to this prayer, since as thou hast great reason to desire all these things should be granted, thou hast as good ground to believe they shall. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer after the Absolution.*

Most merciful Lord God, who hast owned us for thy children by creating us, preserving and providing for us, and after our manifold disobedience hast by this gracious promise of pardon again encouraged us to call thee OUR FATHER; thy mercy in receiving us exceeds the compassions of earthly parents, and thy infinite goodness and power do evidence thy glory WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, and therefore canst do whatever thou pleasest in all the world. Lord, we are so transported with thy admirable pity towards us and all poor sinners, that forgetting our own wants we desire thy glory in the first place, even that by us and all men HALLOWED, sanctified, revered, and for ever feared, may BE THY NAME, from which we have had our help, and thy attributes, in which we have our comfort; that we may ever express a fervent love and dutiful regard to thee, and all belonging to thee. We lately were (as many yet are) in rebellion against thee; but since we have found thee so merciful a Prince, Lord, let THY KINGDOM COME into all our hearts, to rule us by thy grace, and to fit us against thou shalt come in glory to crown thy servants, and to condemn thy enemies, whose misery thou delightest not in, but deferrest thy coming, because it is thy will that we all should live in holiness here and happiness hereafter. Dear Father, let this THY WILL BE DONE, both by our obedience to thy word, and by our submission to thy providence; for then shall 68 we be truly happy when thy good-will and pleasure is done by us, and on us thy servants IN EARTH, as readily and fully, as constantly and cheerfully, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN, by the blessed saints and angels, whose food it is to obey thy commands. But, Lord, thou knowest the frailty of our nature, and the misery of our condition, which needs continual support and supplies, and forceth us to beseech thee who hast all blessings at thy disposal, to GIVE US THIS DAY, which for any thing we know may be our last, and therefore we look no further, nor ask no more than OUR DAILY BREAD, even so much food and raiment, health and wealth, prosperity and success, as thou seest is necessary and convenient for us in this state of life, in which thou hast placed us; so much as may enable us to serve thee, not

encourage us to forget thee, or entice us to increase the number of our sins, which are too many already : but we will daily acknowledge and bewail them ; and remembering the vengeance due unto us for them, we now earnestly beseech thee to pardon AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES against thy righteous laws and just authority, for Jesus' sake, who hath made satisfaction for them. Gracious Lord, by his merits forgive us AS WE by the help of thy grace, the injunction of thy gospel, and the example of thy mercy FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US in fewer and lesser matters. We tremble at the remembrance of all those amazing miseries which our former sins have made us liable to ; and though we deserve to be deserted, yet O let us never fall again into those dreadful circumstances, AND LEAD US NOT into any dangerous occasions or opportunities of sin ; but though many snares be laid for us, guide us so by thy Providence, that we may seldom fall INTO TEMPTATION, and never fall by it ; let not Satan, who desires our eternal ruin, again get power over us, and advantage against us ; BUT DELIVER US FROM all the EVIL which he enticeth us to as a tempter, and will punish us for as a tormentor, that we may neither deliver ourselves over to him by sin, nor be given up to his malice to execute thy sentence upon us for it. These mercies we need ; and though we are unworthy, yet we petition thee for them : thou mayest help us, FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM ; thou canst do it, for thine is THE POWER ; and we hope thou wilt do it, for thou hast freely and frequently relieved poor penitent sinners ; for which men and angels do acknowledge thine is the praise AND THE GLORY, and we shall by thy mercy to us be obliged also to join in this just acknowledgment, which shall be made to thee in heaven and earth FOR EVER AND EVER world without end. AMEN. Be it so.

## SECTION VI.

## OF THE RESPONSES.

§. I. AFTER this devout address to God in that incomparable prayer which Jesus taught, are added some short and pithy sentences, in which the people are to

bear a part; according to the manner of the primitive Christians<sup>a</sup>, who used this so constantly, that Eusebius<sup>b</sup> brings it as an argument to prove the Essenes were Christians, because they sung by turns, answering one another. It was the custom of the Jews to have this duty thus performed by the Priests and Levites only; but Christians have a greater privilege, and every man is so far a priest, 1 Pet. ii. 9, Rev. i. 6, as to have leave to join in this spiritual sacrifice; which is for the benefit as well as the honour of the people, if they did rightly understand it; for,

First, This shews their full consent to all that is prayed for; and Christ teacheth us that we must agree in our asking, that so our prayers may be heard<sup>c</sup>. Nor is their silence sufficient to express such a consent as is here required; for they must not only be willing these things may be prayed for, but they must desire that God should look on it as every one's particular request; and accordingly minister and people must with one mouth as well as one mind, Rom. xv. 6, praise God.

Secondly, This quickens their devotion by a grateful variety, making those holy offices pleasant, which our corrupt nature is so apt to think tedious, and by a different manner of address making the time seem short<sup>d</sup>, the devotions new, and our affections as fresh as in the beginning of our prayer.

Thirdly, This engageth their attention, which is apt to stray, especially in sacred things, and most of all when the people bear no part; but when they have also their share of duty, they must expect before it

<sup>a</sup> August. de Verb. Apost. Serm. 12. Ὁ λαὸς τὰ ἀκροστίχια ὑποφάλλετο. Constit. Ap. lib. 2. cap. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 2. cap. 17.

<sup>c</sup> Matt. xviii. 19. Gr. συμφωνήσουσιν.

<sup>d</sup> Breve videbitur tempus quod tantis operum varietatibus occupatur. Hieron. Epist. ad Læt.

comes, that they may be ready; when it is come, they must observe, that they may be right; and after, take heed to prepare against the next answer they are to give. How pious therefore and prudent is this order of the church, thus to intermix the people's duty! That they may be always exercised in it, or preparing for it, and never have leisure to entertain those vain thoughts which will set upon them, especially in the house of God, if they be not thus employed<sup>e</sup>: and assuredly the people's general neglect of answering in their course hath introduced so much laziness, sleeping, irreverence, inadvertency and weariness, into the house of God. Our pious ancestors may make our devotion blush when we see them all the time of prayer in *procinctu*, with their knees bended, their hands lifted up, their eyes fixed on the minister, and their hearts and mouths ready to say Amen, and to answer wherever it was required. And if ever this devotion be restored in the church, (which all good men passionately wish,) it must be by learning the people zealously and conscientiously to join in these pious ejaculations allotted to them; which that they may do, I shall now explain them to every one's capacity.

§. II. Psalm li. 15. O LORD, OPEN THOU OUR LIPS: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHEW FORTH THY PRAISE] This sentence, with many of those that follow, are indited by the Spirit of God, taken out of that excellent repository of devotion, The Psalms of David, from whence the Jews took the greatest part of their Liturgy; and the primitive Christians collected their prayers<sup>f</sup>, and composed their hymns out of it; because it contains variety of prayers and praises, exactly fitted for all persons in all circumstances, as pertinent as if they had

<sup>e</sup> Nihil agendo male agere discimus. Senec.

<sup>f</sup> See Dr. Hammond's Preface to his Annot.

been made for the present occasion; and so we shall find this to be, which we now consider. The words are to be found in Psalm li. 15, and were anciently transcribed into the Christian Liturgies, for they are ordered to be three times repeated in that ancient one 70 attributed to St. James, (not to mention them of later date.) And nothing can be more pertinent when minister and people are about to begin to praise God; for speech is the gift of God, Prov. xvi. 1, Exod. iv. 11; it is that in which man excels all other creatures, and was given us to this end, that we might glorify him; whence the tongue is called *our glory*<sup>g</sup>, because it is the instrument of his praise. But here we do not only acknowledge our speech was given us to this end, but desiring now to make the right use of it, we beg his help, and confess from him we have the faculty, and the exercise of that faculty in every act, especially in holy things; wherein unless he *open our lips*, we cannot *set forth his praise*. This is the sense of the words considered absolutely and alone. But if we observe whence they are taken, (viz. out of the most famous penitential psalm,) and where they are set, (viz. soon after the confession,) they will afford us another profitable meditation. David useth them after the confession of his grievous sin, and an earnest supplication for pardon; and we use them in the close of the penitential part, before we begin our solemn praises and petitions, intimating that till we have some hopes of our pardon, we cannot proceed any further, and so we briefly but zealously renew that great suit for mercy, because sin and the guilt of it doth stop our mouths, and shut our lips, that we become tongue-tied<sup>h</sup>, speechless, and mute, as Judah, (the most

<sup>g</sup> Psalm xvi. 9. Gloria mea. <sup>h</sup> Matt. xxii. 12. Gr. 'Ο δὲ ἰφι-  
LXX. 'Η γλῶσσά μου. Vid. μῶθη.  
Psalm xxxvi. 12. et cviii. 1.

eloquent of all his brethren,) being taken in a fault, Gen. xlv. 16, knew not what to answer, being full of inward confusion. Nor hath sin this effect only on evil men<sup>i</sup>, but as much, if not more, on the best; whose ingenuity produceth a shame that will stop their mouths as much as the wicked man's terrors, of which the famous Origen is an instance, who having been once compelled to sacrifice<sup>k</sup>, was long after struck dumb with reading the sixteenth verse of the fiftieth Psalm, *But unto the ungodly, saith God, What hast thou to do, &c.* and broke off with tears, not able to proceed further; which that it may not happen to us, viz. that a guilty conscience may not spoil the music of our praises, or seal up our lips in prayer, we here do beseech him (by speaking peace to our souls) to give us hopes of his forgiving mercy; that whereas our fear, shame, and grief make us now stand mute, as so many guilty persons, we may have (*παρρησίαν*) a freedom of speech in his presence, when the terrors of offending slaves are changed into the liberty of reconciled sons. Which mercy if he grant, we do all engage to use it to his glory, and resolve it shall kindle the flames of gratitude and love in all our hearts; and if he *open our lips, our mouth shall set forth his praise*: and when we praise him for other things, we will think of this pardoning mercy, and redouble our eucharistical gratulations; and doubtless this petition shall be heard, for we desire it not only for our own benefit, but to fit us to set forth his praise. We have cause, when we go about to glorify God, to cry out we are of *unclean lips*, Isai. vi. 5, but if God send hopes of remission, when the seraphim toucheth our lips, and taketh away our iniquity, then

<sup>i</sup> Ut leprosi labium tegitur. <sup>k</sup> Epiphan. Panar. lib. 2. Levit. xiii. 45. Ita os peccatoris tom. i. Hæres. 64. obturatur. Cyril. Alex.

we shall be fit for all holy duties, and with that prophet readily say, *Here I am, Lord, send me.*

§. III. Psalm lxx. 1. O GOD, MAKE SPEED TO SAVE US: O LORD, MAKE HASTE TO HELP US] These words are frequently repeated in the Book of Psalms; and are not much varied from that form of exclamation<sup>1</sup> which the Jews contracted into Hosanna, which signifies, *Save now, Lord, we beseech thee*; but the old Latin Liturgies<sup>m</sup> do assure us they are taken out of the seventieth Psalm, though they are found also, Psalm xl. 13, where you may behold David surveying his sins more numerous than his hairs, more weighty than his heart could bear; terrified with which sad spectacle, he breaks out into this passionate ejaculation, which may well befit our mouths, who so lately have been confessing our offences; for it contains all that any penitent sinner, about to put up his petitions, need to sue for by way of preparation; viz. deliverance and safety from evil, and help in that which is good. We suppose ourselves like a besieged city; our sins behind threaten us, and our corruptions have blocked us up before, and fear is on every side; yet still the way to heaven is open, and we send these prayers upwards to the place where the King of heaven resides, for a speedy rescue to be granted to his distressed subjects, 1 Sam. xi. 4, 2 Chron. xx. 12. When we look back, and see our innumerable<sup>71</sup> iniquities, we cry out, *O God, make speed to save us*: when we look forward to all those duties which we are to do, and the great opposition we are sure to meet with, we say, *O Lord, make haste to help us*. Our guilt will *make speed* to pursue us, Satan to destroy us, and

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxviii. 25. Heb. אֲנִי וְעַמִּי Obsecro Jehovah, serva nunc, Jun. et Trem.

<sup>m</sup> Deus in adjutorium meum

intende. Psalm lxx. 1. Vid. Gr. Vers. D. D. Duport.—Εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν πρόσχει ut LXX.



evil thoughts to hinder our devotions. Wherefore we must beg that our gracious God will also *make haste to save and help us* just now, when we are in danger and need, and it will double<sup>n</sup> the kindness: nor will he call these speedy cries impatience or presumption, but account them a prudent fear of our imminent danger, and a right apprehension of our urgent necessities; and for our comfort let us remember, they that are the most liberal are the most speedy<sup>o</sup> in doing good. He that we make this request to hath charged us (see Prov. iii. 8.) never to put off a necessitous person till the morrow, if we have it in our power; and he ever hath it in his to help us; wherefore we may be assured he will save and help us this day, and by the speed of his help, give us cause in the next place to sing, *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

§. IV. GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON, AND TO THE HOLY GHOST: AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW, AND EVER SHALL BE, WORLD WITHOUT END, AMEN] Although the words of this excellent hymn are not in scripture, yet it is a paraphrase on the song of the seraphims<sup>p</sup>, and is expressly grounded on God's word, 1 John v. 7, not only as it is an act of adoration to Almighty God; but as it is a particular address to each person of the blessed Trinity, who being equal in their Godhead, ought equally to be worshipped, as might here be fully proved, but that it is sufficiently done by others. This truth indeed by the malice of the Devil, and the envy of ambitious and wicked men, hath met with more opposition than all other Christian doctrines: the Arians, Sabellians, Eunomians, Apollinarists, Macedonians, and almost all heretics, denied

<sup>n</sup> Bis dat qui cito dat. Seneca.

<sup>o</sup> Proprium est libenter facientis cito facere. Id.

<sup>p</sup> Isai. vi. 3. Unde hymnum

ᾠδὴν originem duxisse fertur in Ecclesia Græca.

either the divinity of one, or equality of all the persons; but the church got this advantage<sup>q</sup> by it, that this fundamental article was more narrowly examined, clearly explained, and fully proved than otherwise it had been; and among other good effects of these bad causes was the composure of this eucharistical hymn, (as some think,) or rather the enjoining it in daily use, (which I rather believe,) for there are many footsteps of it before Arius' time, or any of those councils which condemned him; and though before the danger of this heresy every one of the Fathers had a form of doxology of his own, yet with little variety of words they all expressed the same thing, viz. to ascribe all honour and glory to the three persons of the glorious Trinity. Nay, these very words are set down by Clemens of Alexandria<sup>r</sup>, as the Christians' form of praising God [above an hundred years before the council of Nice, viz. anno 190]; besides, it appears that this, or somewhat very like it<sup>s</sup>, was used in the service of the church before, because the Arians did alter the ancient form into *Glory be to the Father by the Son, and in the Holy Ghost*; for which they are sharply reprehended by the orthodox Fathers, who afterwards annexed it to their public devotions<sup>t</sup>, almost in this form in which we now have it. All which doth not only prove the antiquity of it, but teach us that it may serve for two purposes;

<sup>q</sup> Multa quippe ad fidem catholicam pertinentia, dum hæreticorum callida inquietudine agitantur, ut adversus eos defendi possint, et considerantur diligentius, et investigantur clarius, et instantius prædicantur. Aug. de Civitate Dei, lib. 16. cap. 2.

<sup>r</sup> Αἰνοῦντες τῷ μόνῳ Πατρὶ καὶ Ἰῶσιν τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι. Clem. Alex. Pædag.

<sup>s</sup> Gloria Deo Patri, honor item et adoratio, cum Filio collega, una cum sancto vivificatore Spiritu. Athan.

<sup>t</sup> Δόξα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι νῦν, καὶ ἀεὶ, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν. Liturg. S. Chrys. et Basil. Et aliquando, Ὅτι πρέπει σοι πᾶσα δόξα, &c. Et, Σοὶ τὴν δόξαν ἀναπέμπομεν πατρὶ, &c.

First, as a form of praising God, and glorifying every person of the Trinity, which was the first design of those that invented it. Secondly, as a shorter creed and declaration of our faith of the Trinity in unity, which was the use it was fitted to afterwards. I wish we might have no occasion to make use of it in the second sense as a test for heretics (though the disciples of Socinus and fanatic enthusiasts do even still deride or deny this mystery); but if there were no such, it might serve still its principal end, to be a form of ascribing all praise and glory to the Supreme Being, and an act of adoration to each person, which we are obliged particularly to pay, because every one of the persons in the Trinity hath done peculiar benefits for us: so that it is our duty to praise the Father for our creation, the Son for our redemption, the Holy Ghost for our sanctification. The Father hath sent us into the world, and preserves and provides for us in it. The Son hath lived with us, and died for us, and being re-  
 72 turned to his glory is still mindful of us. The Holy Ghost doth come to us, and stay with us as a guard and a guide, a comforter and an advocate; clearing our minds, cleansing our hearts, quickening our affections and enforcing our prayers: and shall we not then be highly ungrateful, if we pay not a particular tribute to every person in special as well as to all in general. Remember the angels sung praise to the undivided and ever-blessed Trinity in the morning of the creation, in the beginning of all time, Job xxxviii. 7, and they and all the world do it now, and both men and angels shall continue this jubilee to eternity. As long as goodness endures<sup>u</sup>, gratitude and praise cannot cease. This *was*,

<sup>u</sup> Omnes tam orationes quam nunquam cessabit. R. D. K.  
 oblationes cessabunt in seculo Psal. c. 4.  
 futuro, sed oblatio gratiarum

and *is*, and *ever shall be* done in all ages and generations, Psalm cxlv. 4. The patriarchs and prophets did it in the beginning and first ages of the world; the apostles and martyrs in the first planting of the gospel. And all these, though removed to heaven, continue to sing praises to the Trinune God there, as we and all pious Christians do here; and there will never want tongues in heaven and earth to sing this gratulatory hymn for all generations. Observe further the comprehensiveness of these few words, which extend to all things as well as to all times and persons; and present at once to our view all the mercies of God, past, present, and to come. They are an acknowledgment that all the good that ever was or shall be done, with all that is now enjoyed in heaven and earth, hath proceeded from this all-sufficient and everflowing fountain, to whom this tribute of praise is, and was, and ever will be due. Behold then, O pious soul, a glorious choir of angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, saints and martyrs in heaven, with all holy men and women in all the world, at once with united voices and joyful hearts singing this triumphant song. Let this inspire thee with holy raptures and ecstasies of devotion whilst thou singest thy part here on earth, and when thou art taken hence, thy place shall be supplied by the succeeding generations, and thou shalt be advanced to a state as endless as his mercy, where thou shalt praise him to eternity. What better form can we have to glorify God by than this, which is a declaration of our faith, and a discharge of our homage, in which we acknowledge his former mercies, confess his present favours to us and all the world, and glorify him for both? We hope in him for those that are to come, expecting all from him, and promising those returns of eucharist which we will for ever make to him. How

can this be done too often, or repeated too frequently? Surely his mercies are more frequent than our praises can be. Those that censure this as a vain repetition, would ill have digested the hundred blessings\* which the Jews are bid to say every day, and might be offended at David's *seven times a day*, Psalm cxix. 64, and St. Paul's charge to *rejoice always*, 1 Thess. v. 18, Phil. iv. 4, but as God never thinks it too often to relieve us, let us never think his praises too many, too tedious or impertinent, but in Psalms, in Litanies, and every thing, let us give thanks; and when *Gloria Patri* is not in our mouths, let it be in our hearts, that we may never forget his benefits.

To this we shall only add the particular reason why the church hath placed it in the close of the penitential part of daily prayer; and that is in imitation of holy David, who commonly, when he hath made his confession, declared his distress, and begged pardon and deliverance, then he turns his petitions into praises, because of his lively hope of acceptance, Psalm vi. 9, and cxxx. 7. So we being full of hopes that our gracious Father will forgive us, for his Son's sake by the ministry of his Spirit; we, I say, do now give *Glory to the Father*, who granteth this absolution; *to the Son*, who purchased it and obtained it; *and to the Holy Ghost*, who sealeth and dispenseth it to us; and we also call to mind those innumerable instances of the like infinite mercies to poor sinners, which have been, and ever shall be to the world's end. And what heart can conceive, or tongue express, that ecstasy of ravishing pleasures, which we shall feel at the last day, when we and all true penitents, that ever were or shall be, shall

\* Deut. x. 12. RR. legunt pro tur centum benedictiones quotidie reddere.  
: מִן מִן pro quid leg. centum :  
unde dictum, Unusquisque tene-

all join in singing songs of praise to our dear Redeemer, whom we shall love much, because much is forgiven us? We can foresee those anthems which shall then be sounded on the battlements of heaven by millions of glorious souls rescued from destruction, and we by faith have such a sense hereof, that we begin now that song that we shall sing for evermore.

§. V. PRAISE YE THE LORD: THE LORD'S NAME BE 73  
PRAISED] The first part of this, or the Versicle, is no other than the English of *Hallelujah*, which of old was accounted so sacred, that the church<sup>y</sup> used it in its native language; so St. John in the Revelations keeps the word *Hallelujah*, Rev. xix. 1, 3, 4 and 6, but our church hath made it more intelligible to her children by teaching it to them in their own language; for in our tongue it is exactly rendered\* *Praise ye the Lord*. Now this *Hallelujah* was the name of a hymn in frequent use, Tob. xiii. 18, among the Jews, who used also after the Passover to sing six Psalms, [from Psalm cxiii. to Psalm cxviii.] which hymn (Matt. xxvi. 30.) they called the great *Hallelujah*, because in those Psalms this word is often repeated; and perhaps to distinguish it from some lesser *Hallelujah* of daily use in the temple-service. From the Jews St. John learned it, and the Christian church from both; for it was ever annexed to, and frequently repeated in all their Liturgies, which was so well known, that when Olympius the heathen philosopher heard an *Hallelujah* sung early in the morning, in the temple of Serapis in Egypt, before any man had come in thither, he fled from the place, gathering

<sup>y</sup> Amen et Hallelujah (quod nec Latino nec barbaro licet in suam linguam transferre) Ebræo cunctas gentes vocabulo decantare. August. in Pascen. Ep. 178.

\* Ἀλληλουῖα, αἰνος τῷ ὄντι Θεῷ. Hesych. (qui τῷ exponit per τὸ ὄν) vel Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον, (τῷ est contractio Jehovæ.) Theodoret in Psal. cxi. et cxiii.

by this prognostic, that the heathen temple should become a Christian church<sup>a</sup>. It was constantly sung in all Christian assemblies, though with some variety; at Rome most solemnly at Easter; in other places<sup>b</sup> all the fifty days after till Whitsunday, which were days of greatest joy among them. But every where it was used on the Lord's day<sup>c</sup>. And thus we imitate the forms used by pious and primitive antiquity; and if any ask why it is placed here, I answer, first, as a return to the *Gloria Patri*, in which having worshipped the Trinity, we here adore the Unity, worshipping and praising three persons and one God. Secondly, it may look further back to the absolution; for *Hallelujah* is an ἐπὶ νίκῃ, a triumphant song for victory over our enemies. It was first made on that occasion, saith a Jewish doctor<sup>d</sup>, and St. John, Rev. xix. 1, 3, 4, 6, applies it to that song which the saints sung for the overthrow of their enemies; so doth old Tobit also, with reference to Israel's restauration. And as Moses, Exod. xv, began his song of victory, so the minister begins this, and all the people echo again in the same strain<sup>e</sup>, when we behold our sins (the Egyptians that ruled us with rigour, and pursued us with guilt) lie dead before our eyes, then it is proper to sing *Hallelujah*. Thirdly, it may look forward to the reading of the Psalms, and serve as a preface thereto<sup>f</sup>, because praise is the sub-

<sup>a</sup> Soz. Hist. Tr. lib. 9. cap. 29.

<sup>b</sup> Idem, ibid. cap. 39.

<sup>c</sup> Ut autem Hallelujah per illos solos dies quinquaginta in ecclesia cantetur, non usquequaque observatur, nam et in aliis diebus varie cantatur alibi, ipsis autem Dominicis diebus ubique. Aug. Ep. 120. Vid. Id. Psal. cvi. Item Ambros. Apol. pro Dav. et Paul. Diaconus, lib. 25.

<sup>d</sup> Centum et tres Psalmos, dixit David, et non dixit Schira Canticum, donec vidisset ruinam improborum. R. D. K. in Psal. civ.

<sup>e</sup> Exod. xv. 1. cum 20 et 21.

<sup>f</sup> Hallelujah is the title to many Psalms. See Dr. Hammond on Psalm cvi. 1. and Psalm cxi. 1.

ject-matter of most of them; and the Jews call it the *Book of Praises*, by which we being about to praise God, do mutually encourage one another with this most excellent<sup>s</sup> canticle, which some think is the song of angels in heaven, with whom we hope at last to bear a part.

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## SECTION VII.

74

### OF THE NINETY-FIFTH PSALM.

§. I. THE Holy Spirit being the inditer, and David the penman of this sacred hymn, the matter of it is unquestionable, Heb. iii. 7, iv. 7, and the placing it here to be used in the daily service doth further confirm (what we may every where observe) the prudent and pious care of the church in her choice; this part of scripture being as fit a preparatory to all the succeeding offices, as is to be found in the holy word of God. It contains both directions and exhortations to praises, prayers, and hearing God's word, which (as was shewed before<sup>h</sup>) are the duties of our church assemblies; and its very composure shews it was designed for the public service, Grotius thinks for the feast of Tabernacles<sup>i</sup>, Calvin and others for the sabbath day, Heb. iii. 7; but St. Paul, Heb. iii. 15, whose authority we follow, thinks it fit for every day; and by his application of it, we have sufficient ground to adopt it into the Christian daily worship; having also the testimony of many Jewish writers, that it belongs to the time of the Messiah, as also the Greek Euchologion, to shew it was particularly sung in the Eastern church, according to the liturgies both of St. Chrysostom and St. Basil

<sup>s</sup> Hallelujah, inter omnes cantiones maxime excellit. Id. R. D. Kimchi.

<sup>h</sup> Vide Sect. II. §. 8.

<sup>i</sup> Calvin in Psalm xcv.



and St. Augustin's testimony, that it was sung in the African church<sup>k</sup>. And it is too evident, the sluggishness of our hearts to all holy duties makes these powerful exhortations necessary to awaken us, these strong arguments to convince us, and these dreadful threatenings and examples to warn us. All which are contained in this Psalm, as will appear by the following scheme :

*The Analysis of the XCVth Psalm.*

			Ver.
§. II. The XCVth Psalm contains a threefold exhortation :	1. To praise God, shewing	1. The manner how, viz. both externally and internally, . . . . .	1. O come, let us sing unto the Lord, &c.
		2. The reasons why, viz. for	2. Let us come before his presence with, &c.
			3. For the Lord is a great God,
			And a great King above all gods.
			4. In his hands are all the corners, &c.
	2. To pray unto him, directing	1. His greatness, . . . . .	5. The sea is his, and he made it, &c.
			6. O come, let us worship, and fall down, &c.
			Before the Lord, &c.
			7. For he is the Lord our God,
			And we are the people, &c.
	3. To hear his word, being,	2. His supremacy, . . . . .	8. To day
			if ye will hear, &c.
		3. His power by virtue of	9. Harden not your hearts,
			As in the provocation, and as in the day, &c.
		1. The manner how it must be done, . . . . .	10. Forty years long was I grieved, &c.
			11. Unto whom I swear in my wrath, &c.
		2. The person to whom, . . . . .	
		3. The reasons why, viz. because it is	
		1. A summons to do it,	
		2. A caution against the neglect of it, declaring	
		1. Of what we must beware, . . . . .	
		2. Why we must beware,	
		1. Because of the Jews' sin,	
		2. Because of their punishment,	

§. III. Ver. 1, 2. O COME, LET US SING UNTO THE LORD, LET US HEARTILY REJOICE IN THE STRENGTH OF OUR SALVATION. LET US COME BEFORE HIS PRESENCE WITH THANKSGIVING, AND SHEW OURSELVES GLAD IN HIM WITH PSALMS] It hath ever been, and still is the cus-

<sup>k</sup> De Verb. Apostol. Serm. 10.

tom for soldiers, when they were about to join in battle<sup>1</sup>, to encourage one another with a general shout; to which we may compare this joyful acclamation of the church militant. We being now about to besiege heaven with our prayers, every man shews his own forwardness and reproves his neighbour's backwardness, with *O come, let us, &c.* This is that which we are commanded to do by the Apostle, whenever we meet in the house of God, viz. to *admonish one another*, Heb. x. 25. *in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*, Ephes. v. 19, Coloss. iii. 15, and to encourage one another, as the minister and people do most pathetically in this Psalm, stirring up each other's hearts in these two first verses to praise God; the same thing (after the poetic manner) being expressed in divers words; from which it appears that this Psalm was fitted for the two sides of the choir, and so we still use it. The priest beginning the exhortation (*O come, let us sing, &c.*), and the people answering (*Let us come, &c.*) thereby approving the advice, and returning the courteous invitation, and both minister and people do mutually press the duty, and express their joint resolutions to glorify God. In private it may suffice that our heart and spirit rejoice in God, Luke i. 46, 47, but we are now in public, and therefore as God hath bestowed his favours, 1 Cor. vi. 20, on both soul and body, we must (both in heart and voice) glorify him by both. We must sing his praises, and thereby shew even to men, who cannot see the heart, that we are glad and joyful in remembering his goodness. We must not stand mute, but our tongues must affect our hearts, and the hearts of all about us; that every man's light may shine clearly, and our neighbour's torch may be kindled at our fire, till the several sparks of gratitude

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xvii. 20. Gr. ἀλαλαγμός. Vide Grot. in Josh. vi. 5.

that lie hid in single hearts be blown up and united into one flame, bright as the blaze of the altar; and till we be turned into holy joy and love, which will be the effect of our zealous performing the outward part. But we must also be sure to let our heart make an unison with our tongue, Ephes. v. 19, &c. Rom. xv. 6, even to *rejoice heartily*, or else the grunting of swine is not more harsh and unpleasant in our ears, than the best harmony of their voices in God's, who only dwell on the sounds, and never observe the sense, nor excite any devout affections. As a caution against such formality, there are four good considerations proposed in these two verses: first, the person to whom these praises are addressed, *unto the Lord*, who sees our hearts, and cannot (as men) be deceived with verbal compliments. Secondly, the reason why we praise him, because he is *the strength of our salvation*, a rock of defence<sup>m</sup> to us, and a mighty champion for us, and powerful rescuer of us, on whose power and mercy relies the strength of all our hopes for this world and the next. Thirdly, the place where we praise him; we are *before his presence* in those assemblies where he peculiarly manifests himself. The Jews were before the ark, but St. Paul teacheth us that we come into the holiest of all, for we Christians are admitted into the presence chamber, and if we mock him, we do it to his very face. Fourthly, the manner in which he expects to be praised, even that we be *glad in him* and rejoice in the Lord, not with the mirth of a theatre, which is loose and voluptuous, but with the joys of cherubims, and all those celestial orders, whose joy is kindled from the pure beams of the Divine love. These things as seriously thought on as they are frequently repeated,

<sup>m</sup> See Dr. Hammond, Annot. Potentissimus meus liberator. on Psalm lxxxix. 26. [l.] Syr. Et LXX. Ἀντιλήπτορ, &c.

would spiritualize our joy, and help us both in heart and voice to glorify the Fountain of all good.

§. IV. Ver. 3, 4, 5. FOR THE LORD IS A GREAT GOD, 76 &c.] It is impossible we should do any action cheerfully till we are informed of the reason why it must be done; but when the understanding is convinced fully, the will chooseth freely, and then all the faculties of the soul and members of the body lend their help readily to put it in execution. For which cause these three verses contain the reasons of, and motives to, that duty of *praising God in heart and voice*, to which the former verses exhort us; for as the subjects of great princes celebrate their masters' praises, and with proud hyperboles set forth the greatness of their power, the multitude of their vassals, the largeness of their dominions, and the excellency of their achievements; so we do here praise the King of kings, and our particular benefactor; for we are more obliged to glorify him, and can more justly commend him upon all these accounts, than the favourites of the greatest monarch upon earth; they are forced to magnify small matters, and add many to fill up their Lord's character; but we need only relate the truth, even that our God is, 1. infinite and immense in himself, 2. absolute and supreme in his authority, 3. universal and unlimited in his dominions, 4. glorious and admirable in his works; all which will quicken our praises, if we consider them severally as they are laid down in order in these verses.

§. V. Ver. 3. THE LORD IS A GREAT GOD] First, let us view his essential greatness and immensity, which places him beyond the bounds of our apprehension; but he is so much the more to be esteemed<sup>a</sup>, because

<sup>a</sup> Hoc est quod Deum æstimari facit, dum æstimari non capit. Tert. Apol. Nec videri potest visu clarior, nec compre-

hendi tactu purior, nec æstimari sensu major est, et ideo sic eum digne æstimamus dum inæstimabilem diximus. Cypr.

he cannot be comprehended: our senses cannot represent him, nor can those thoughts (that can measure both heaven and earth) contain him, who is not so properly said to be in the world, as the world in him; for he is every where<sup>o</sup>, but is confined no where: and though to pursue this contemplation would amaze our understandings rather than help our devotion, yet it will teach us to be humble, and to supply with admiration what we cannot conceive clearly, nor explicate fully; and it will engage us to extol him as much as is possible, that our praises may bear some proportion with his greatness. Yet let us believe, that whatever we say or think of him here, is so far short of what he really is, that when we are admitted to the beatific vision, we shall confess with that queen, that *the one half was never told us*, 1 Kings x. 6, 7, 8.

§. VI. AND A GREAT KING ABOVE ALL GODS] Secondly, let us take notice of his supremacy over all, not only men but gods; for though there be no other God but he alone, yet there are many to whom that name is given, 1 Cor. viii. 5. Idolaters give it to deceased heroes and demons, of which Eusebius out of Hesiod reckons 30,000, and St. Augustine advances the sum to 300,000, every one of which was honoured with magnificent temples, sumptuous altars, costly and pompous rites and sacrifices, curious images and rich statues; they were attended with millions of priests, maintained at the public charge, enriched with large donatives, advanced to the highest dignities. And all this done by kings and emperors, senators and philosophers; the greatest, richest, and wisest in the world, in honour of a creature, nay, a devil, which is but a slave to our

<sup>o</sup> Αὐτὸς ἐαυτῷ τόπος, καὶ αὐτὸς ἄλλου περιεχόμενος. Philo leg. al-  
ἐαυτοῦ πλήρης, τὰ μὲν ἄλλα—πληρῶν leg. lib. 1. p. 48.  
καὶ περιέχων, αὐτὸς δ' ὑπ' οὐδένος

great and glorious God; and if such honours are paid them, what doth he that is both their and our Master deserve from us? O ye Christians, when ye go about to praise the true God, behold the smoking altars and bleeding sacrifices, the triumphant processions and solemn addresses, which are paid so freely by the slaves of Satan, and be ashamed of your rude and cheap worshipping of him that is far above all gods; consider the pleasing harmony of rarest voices and sweetest instruments, which wait upon the hymns of those that tremble at the name of your Lord, and blush to offer up either flat or feigned gratulations: as you have the greatest God, so let him have the noblest adorations. Again, angels are called *gods*<sup>p</sup>, and it may be applied to them; they are so glorious, that those holy men to 77 whom they have appeared could scarce refrain from giving them Divine adoration. They are truly admirable for the brightness of their presence, the swiftness of their motion, clearness of their knowledge, and greatness of their power; yet these are but the officers of his courts, and executors of his will, who pay him their duty with loud praises, veiled faces, and submissive prostrations. Now if the attendants be bright as the sun, quick as lightning, and powerful as thunder, what is he that is their Lord? what songs of eucharist doth he deserve? Lastly, the governors of this world are also called by the name of *gods*<sup>q</sup>; but they are his creatures, and they have no power but from him, Exod. xxi. 6, Psalm lxxxii. 1, and cxxxviii. 1, no honour but as they administer his rights and represent his person; and can you see their large retinues and solemn observances, or hear the strained praises which their flat-

<sup>p</sup> Psalm viii. 6. and Psalm Pythag. apud Stob. Principes  
xcvii. 7. compared with Heb. i. 6. instar Deorum. Tacit. Annal. 2.

<sup>q</sup> Βασιλεὺς—Θεὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποις.

tering parasites cast upon them, who are your Lord's servants and tributaries; and will you give less to the King of kings, the Lord of men and angels?

§. VII. Ver. 4. IN HIS HAND ARE ALL THE CORNERS OF THE EARTH; AND THE STRENGTH OF THE HILLS IS HIS ALSO] Thirdly, let us take a prospect of the vastness and immensity of his empire, which hath no other limits than those of the universe; for both sea and land are in his hand, that is, in his power, under his command and at his disposal: so are the most hidden and secret *corners*<sup>r</sup> of *the earth*, into which man's eye cannot search, and also the inaccessible tops of the loftiest mountains<sup>s</sup>, which are scarce to be reckoned among the dominions of earthly kings, being either fortified by robbers, and so impregnable, or deserted by the husbandman, and so unserviceable. Yet the darkest caverns and highest rocks and mountains, which own no other Lord, even they are his; his eyes discern the one, and his power can reach the other. His dominion extends to the *corners* or uttermost parts of *the earth*, (as some here read<sup>t</sup>), so far as no prince's armies could penetrate, nor perhaps people inhabit; yet these parts of the world are his, and those vast mountains (whose immovableness is the emblem of his unshaken and eternal principality) are as so many natural bulwarks for the defence of his kingdom, which takes in the inhabitants of heaven, the armies of the abyss, and is larger than the world, stronger than the most inassailable mountains. This King of kings and Lord of the universe may challenge the most hearty and humble praises from his servants: which we might further improve from their allegorical exposition of these words, who apply them to the several conditions of men, Psalm lxxii. 3, and

<sup>r</sup> Abstrusissima terræ. Vatab.      <sup>t</sup> LXX. *πέαρα*. Vulg. Fines.

<sup>s</sup> Lassitudines montium. Heb.      Psal. cxxxix. 7.

cxlviii. 9; for although he be so great, the meanest and poorest are not below his notice, and though he condescended so far, yet the very richest and greatest (terrible as the hills of the robbers) are not above his power; but he rules and orders all, so that nothing happens to kings or slaves but by his permission, and therefore he may expect glory from all sorts of persons.

§. VIII. Ver. 5. THE SEA IS HIS, AND HE MADE IT, AND HIS HANDS PREPARED THE DRY LAND] Fourthly, let us consider the greatness of his works, and we shall see the arch of heaven, the pillars of the earth, and the fountains of the great deep, were contrived by his wisdom, and finished by his power; so that without boasting, he may say of this goodly fabric as the vain Assyrian did of his royal city, Dan. iv. 30, and none can contradict him. The words *sea* and *land* are the two principal parts, and put for the whole world, and these are his by right of creation, which sure is the justest title. But the making of the sea, and adorning the dry land, is rather here mentioned, because there is a special mark of his wisdom and providence in making that separation (observed by the very heathens<sup>u</sup>). For he hath bound that unfixed element in a girdle of sand which it cannot break; and not only restrained it from overflowing us, but made it serve our necessities, and lend its help for the intercourse and mutual supplies of the most distant nations. And by these two words of *sea* and *land*, we must understand all the furniture of both, which yield us such variety of provisions. All these are God's creatures, but by him freely assigned to our use, desiring no other tribute from us, but to pay those praises to our bountiful Lord and noble Benefactor, which none of the dumb crea- 78

<sup>u</sup> See Grot. de Verit. Relig. Christ. lib. 1. cap. 7.



tures can do; and since he hath given us tongues, we shall be most ingrateful if we glorify him not with them. Philo tells us of a prophet, who, upon a sight of the whole world (before the creation of man), was asked if there wanted any thing to complete so brave a work; he answered, there needed nothing but one to explain that goodly work, and glorify the Maker of it: and then (saith Philo) was man created, and brought into this stately theatre to do those offices. It is pity you should have eyes to see, ears to hear, mouths to taste, and souls to judge and apprehend, if you have not hearts and tongues to sing the encomiums of this great King, who hath made all things so wonderfully, and given them to you so freely. You are pirates and robbers, if you seize the provisions of sea or land, and do not heartily give thanks to the Lord of them. Let the serious apprehension of all this tune your hearts and voices to sing praises in the highest to so great a God, so high a Lord, of so vast perfections and endless dominions, of so infinite power and such noble bounty, that you owe yourselves and all you have to him.

§. IX. Ver. 6, 7. O COME, LET US WORSHIP, AND FALL DOWN, AND KNEEL BEFORE THE LORD OUR MAKER. FOR HE IS THE LORD OUR GOD, AND WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF HIS PASTURE, AND THE SHEEP OF HIS HAND] The people of the East exceeded all others in their expressions of reverence to their kings; and in Persia<sup>x</sup> it was established by law, that they should adore their prince as the visible image of God; so that (as Curtius notes) Darius received divine honour from his subjects. But we are now before the King of kings, whose empire is universal, and his dominions boundless, and therefore we may well advise one another to use the most lowly

<sup>x</sup> Τὸ τιμᾶν βασιλεία καὶ προσκυνεῖν εἰκόνα Θεοῦ τοῦ πάντα σῶζοντος. Artabanus.

gestures, that may express our holy fear of, and awful regard to, so great a Majesty. Prostration of the body (the greatest sign of honour among those nations) is here out of use; but kneeling is still used in our addresses to mortal princes, and is now among us an expression of the greatest civil respect from inferiors: wherefore let us not repine if we be commanded to kneel before our great God, the Lord of heaven and earth, since it was a custom used by the Jews, and by Christ himself, recommended by scripture<sup>y</sup>, and great examples of early observance in the Christian church<sup>z</sup>, and having the unanimous consent of all pious men. But he that shall behold the abominable irreverence and saucy behaviour now used in our devotions, will think it no more than needs for us severely to reprove the people for it. For if the ancient fathers (who had not so much cause) rebuked such as did stand at prayers<sup>a</sup>, well may we complain of them that sit; and both by our words and examples daily say to them, *O come let us kneel*, not to idols or images, the works of your hands, (as heathens, and some that are called Christians, do,) but to *the Lord your Maker*, who made both your soul and body, and expects reverence from both; especially in public, where you are by outward reverence to give testimony of your inward fear of his holy name; and as Christ saith, *He that hath ears*, &c. so I say, *He that hath knees to kneel*, let him kneel to him that is the glorious Maker of the whole man, nay, of the whole world. But we may observe, that though

<sup>y</sup> Genuflexionem in oratione, tam ex Divina quam humana traditione provenisse agnoscit. Calvin. Instit. lib. 4.

<sup>z</sup> Vid. Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 5. anno Christi 170. Genua flectimus orantes. Origen. in Num.

<sup>a</sup> Diacono clamante *Flectamus genua*, maximam partem populi velut columnas erectas stare conspicio, quod Christianis dum in ecclesia oratur, nec licet, nec expedit. Cæsarius Arelat. Hom. 30. Vid. item Hier. in Ephes. cap. 5.

all these words are used to express outward reverence, yet *worship* is a general word, and signifies all parts of God's service, and especially prayer, John iv. 24, Acts viii. 27, so that to *worship* may here signify to *pray*; and as before we encouraged one another to praise God, so now, having represented the omnipotency and all-sufficiency of God, we invite one another to pray to this great God and mighty King, who made all creatures, and disposeth of all things, and can relieve us, whatever our wants be; we need not fear to ask what he cannot do, or to be sent back for want of power to help, (as the suitors to great kings sometimes are, 2 Kings vi. 27.) Have we such a God then? and shall we be slow to worship him, or careless and unmannerly when we make our applications to him? No sure, if we love ourselves, we shall make haste to him, and be reverent when we are before him. If we want any thing, and do not ask him for it, he may justly suppose we question his power or sufficiency, and take it very ill; but when we do pray to him with humility, he  
79 never accounts it boldness, but accepts it as an acknowledgment that we believe his power and supremacy, and as a declaration of our dependence upon him who is *our Maker*, and therefore will be our preserver; for no man makes a curious piece, and then suffers it to decay by minding it no further; much less will God despise the work of his own hands, when he can so easily preserve it. This is the first motive to our putting up petitions to this great God, because he is *our Maker*; but on this ground all the heathen world is as much obliged, and hath as good cause of hopes as we, because he hath created them as well as Christians. But in ver. 7. we are taught an especial obligation lies upon us, (besides what concerns all mankind,) because *he is our God, and we are his people*. The Jews were

once so, but now they are rejected for unbelief, and we adopted into his family<sup>b</sup>, being admitted nearer to God than ever they were; so that he may justly expect we should worship him and pray to him, for every nation calls on their God, though a feigned deity, Micah iv. 5. But *he is the Lord* whom we adore, and therefore able; he is *our God*, and consequently willing to grant our requests. There is a mutual covenant between him and us, he will defend us with an especial providence, and we must serve him with an extraordinary devotion. O blessed are we who have this almighty and most glorious Lord and Ruler of all the world for our God! Why do we look disconsolate, or complain of our wants to them that either will not pity us, or cannot help us? Let us go to the Lord, and complain to our God, for his is all that power and glory of which we heard before. We did not choose him, but he chose us to be his flock, Psalm xxiii. 1, John xv. 16, he feeds us, and folds us, we eat in his pasture, and are defended by his hand; for our being *under his hand*, Gen. xxxix. 8, John xiii. 15, Deut. xxxviii. 3, Numb. xxxiii. 1, denotes his care of us, and undertaking to lead us and keep us, and we are called *his sheep*, that is, his subjects; for a shepherd is put for a king<sup>c</sup> in scripture, and sheep for subjects; *his pasture* shews he feeds us, *his hand* expresseth his ruling of us; wherefore if we want any good, let us remember our God feeds all, much more his own sheep; let us pray to him therefore, and he will furnish us. Or if we fear any evil, let us call to mind his hand is over us, his particular providence is engaged for us, he watches over us night and day. Let us but trust in him, and pray to him for

<sup>b</sup> Ephes. ii. 19. Gr. *οἰκείους τοῦ Θεοῦ*.

<sup>c</sup> Zech. xi. 5. *Ποιμένες λαῶν*.

See both offices joined in two words, Psalm lxxviii. 72, 73.

the continuance of what we have, and the supply of what we want, and we need fear no evil, no cunning fox nor ravenous wolf shall ever be able to pluck us out of his hand.

§. X. Ver. 8. TO-DAY IF YE WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS, AS IN THE PROVOCATION, AND AS IN THE DAY OF TEMPTATION IN THE WILDERNESS] This first sentence in the Hebrew is annexed to the former verse, as the condition on which God will accept us as his sheep, and answer our prayers, viz. *We are the sheep of his pasture, if we will hear his voice to-day*; for his own sheep always do so, John x. 4, and so must we follow our Shepherd, who goes before us by his example<sup>d</sup>, and calls us after him by the voice of his word, otherwise we reject him from being a Shepherd over us, and so he may justly cast us off. But the Greek interpreters begin (as we do in imitation of them) a new sentence here; and are warranted so to do by the change of the person, which (is often used in holy writ, but) hath a peculiar emphasis here: hitherto we have been speaking to one another to stir up our hearts to praise God, and to pray to him; now the Holy Ghost himself, Heb. iii. 7, (to shew that all our devotions will be in vain, unless we resolve to obey<sup>e</sup> God's word,) is brought in, warning us to hear the voice of God, as we expect he should hear our petitions. Wherefore it is expressed with majestic authority, *If ye will*;—you may if you will, I will enable you to do it, and it is best for you so to do, and I advise you to it: or as others, *if ye will* implies a wish<sup>f</sup>; O that ye would hearken and obey! for it is not unfrequent for God to wish we would do that which he knows to be for our

<sup>d</sup> John x. 3. See D. Hammond's Annotations.

<sup>e</sup> Prov. i. 24. compared with ver. 28.

<sup>f</sup> Ita  $\square$  si, sign. O utinam, Exod. xxxii. 32. et  $\delta$  Luc. xix. 42. et cap. xxii. 42.

good. He could make us do it by his omnipotency, but he would not deal with us as with irrational creatures, by force, but by entreaty<sup>g</sup>, because he abhors such constrained observance: he sends his word and his servants every day, and gives us sufficient grace every 80 day, so that we may hear and do his will every day, if our wilful obstinacy hinder not; and if it do, he is grieved for us because we will die, Matt. xxiii. 37. Methinks it should melt our hearts to hear our gracious God so passionately wish and so earnestly call for our conversion, and to consider how he hath long in vain waited for it, adding one day to another even to this very day<sup>h</sup>; yet we put him off, when for ought we know this may be our last day, and then everlasting night begins with us; and though others have their *hodie* still, we must then never more hear this word, this sweet *to-day*, if we would give all the world for it. O foolish people, how carelessly do you let this irrecoverable treasure, this present day pass away, and never consider the loss till it be too late! The Devil and your wicked hearts say, To-day you are too busy, too much taken up in other concerns, and to-morrow you will hear his voice and do his will. But the Holy Ghost saith, *If ye will hear*, it must be *to-day*; for this day is yours, but to-morrow is his whom you provoke by casting away this: and how dare you promise what is another's? or how can you expect God should give you more time, when you so despise this you have? It is likely you shall never see another day, because the more time you have, the more you mock God, and the further you put him off. However, God's word read or

<sup>g</sup> Deut. iv. 29. et cap. xxxii.  
29. Deus non eo modo quo per causas naturales agit, movet hominum voluntates, sed alliciendo. Maimon.

<sup>h</sup> Τὸ δὲ σήμερον, καθ' ἐκάστην αὐτοῦ αἰξεται ἡμέραν. Clem. Alex. Protreptico. Hodie istud permanebit usque ad finem seculi. RR.

preached sounds in your ears this one day more, to try if yet you will so hear it as to observe it, (which is the only right hearing, Gen. xlii. 22;) if not, though your day of grace hath lasted long, it shall quickly have an end. The Jews had their *to-day*, but they would not hear, and now they have it no more; let us beware by their sad example. Now the cause of these dangerous delays, as the good Spirit teacheth us, is *hardness of heart*; and lest any should pretend their hearts were obdurate by nature, we are here charged that we do not harden them, to intimate it is wilful obstinacy, not natural disability<sup>i</sup>. God is ready to take away the stony heart from all who are in covenant with him, if they did not wilfully resist the Holy Ghost, Exod. xxxvi. 26, Acts vii. 51, like the deaf adder stopping their ears; and if we consult St. Paul, we shall find the true causes of hardness of heart are, first, unbelief (Heb. iii. 12.), both of the threatenings pronounced against sin, and of the promises made unto holiness, as if they should never be performed; for hence it is that men go on stupidly in sin, and fear no evil, and slight all the ways of holiness, which they think are tedious and unprofitable; though the Divine truth affirm the contrary, yet as long as men believe not, all our calls and God's also are in vain. A second cause of hardening us is the *deceitfulness of sin* (Heb. iii. 13.), which promiseth present pleasures and profits, with all sensual satisfactions; and if men believe Satan in this, which is so false, and doubt of or deny all that the God of truth affirms, what thunder can awaken them? They will answer to all the calls of God and his Spirit, that they will not leave their fatness, Judges ix. 9, 11, and

<sup>i</sup> Quibus verbis indicatur, non quam ex voluntaria improbitate, dum illius gratiæ aditum ex alio fonte manare nostram adversus Deum rebellionem, obstruimus. Calv. in Heb. iii. 7.

sweetness; they feel no harm in those ways, and find carnal content in them, but do not expect any pleasure in or reward for the other, if they could do them. Why then do any of you make excuses, or complain that you are not softened and bettered by the word of God? Behold the true cause: you come to his house<sup>k</sup>, resolved not to forsake any of your evil courses; you trust the Devil, and believe not him that speaketh from heaven. But take heed and behold a sad example of those hard-hearted Jews, who dealt thus with God at Massah and Meribah, (which words signify *provocation* and *temptation*;) they lusted for water, and because they were not presently supplied, they blasphemed God, questioned his providence, doubted of his promises, and were so hardened by their lust, that they feared not his dreadful indignation, which therefore fell upon them. This day is made by God a day of mercy; but if you hearken to your lusts, and will not hear the calls of God, if you doubt his promises and despise his threatenings as they did, you will turn this day of grace into a *day of provocation and temptation*, and perhaps of destruction and desolation, as you deserve.

§. XI. Ver. 9, 10, 11. WHEN YOUR FATHERS TEMPTED 81  
ME, PROVED ME, AND SAW MY WORKS. FORTY YEARS  
LONG WAS I GRIEVED WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID,  
IT IS A PEOPLE THAT DO ERR IN THEIR HEARTS, FOR THEY  
HAVE NOT KNOWN MY WAYS. UNTO WHOM I SWARE IN  
MY WRATH, THAT THEY SHOULD NOT ENTER INTO MY  
REST] The Jews were wont to boast, that they followed the steps of their forefathers; and so they did, but not of the best of them; not of Abraham, who no sooner heard God's voice, but he was obedient to it,

<sup>k</sup> Quid ergo miramini, vos vel abjecturi, vel correcturi, vel quæ in scholam affertis, ea domum referre? Num ut decreta in Epict. lib. 2. cap. 21.



John viii. 38, Gen. xvii. 23. But they followed the steps of those obstinate and provoking wretches which God delivered out of Egypt, conducted in the wilderness, and sustained them there with bread from heaven; yet they did frequently and continually discover their disobedience and unbelief, by inventing strange ways to try and prove the patience and fidelity of God, growing rude and insolent in every denial, discontent and clamorous if they had not every day a new miracle: and although he had done so much to testify his affection to them and care of them, yet upon every slight occasion they conclude, that they had neither his favour towards them, nor his presence among them. God indeed was so merciful, that he suffered these their evil manners *forty years*, Acts xiii. 18, but not without loathing, abhorrency, and high indignation<sup>1</sup>; and though he did not presently destroy them, yet he gave sufficient testimony that he was displeased at these their dealings. They asked every thing of God they wanted, and were impatient of denial, but yet they would deny God's call to repentance every day. And thus they *erred in their hearts*, and formed wrong notions of him, falsely imagining to be heard without obedience, or else wretchedly concluding God was not able or not willing to make good his promises. And yet as they erred in their minds, so God made them err and wander in that desolate wilderness; and he grew so highly incensed at last at their obstinacy and unbelief, that he unalterably purposed (which is expressed by taking an oath) they should none of them come into that land of Canaan, nor enjoy that rest, which they sometimes despised, and preferred Egypt before it, and otherwhiles doubted whether ever they could obtain it; so that

<sup>1</sup> Psal. xc. 10. *Δυσηρεστήθην.* tuli. Var. Fastidio habui. Jun. Aqu. et Sym. Cum tædio per- et Trem.

notwithstanding all their privileges, and all that God had done for them, these vile returns provoked him to destroy them in the wilderness, and make good that promise to their children which the fathers had made themselves unworthy of. This is the sum of this sad example, and of what happened to those Jews for our learning<sup>m</sup>; and as David set it before the men of his time, and St. Paul before those of his, so doth our church daily set it before you for a warning, that you may not do as they did, lest you perish as they did. You are delivered by Christ from the bondage of sin and Satan, you are the chosen people of God, pilgrims in the wilderness of this world, and travellers to the heavenly Canaan; and here is set before you some that of old did miscarry, that you may shun those paths that led them to ruin; and that you may hearken to God's calls, believe his promises, despise Egypt, and be content with his providence, and then you shall arrive at your desired rest. Otherwise do not encourage yourselves because God spares you, and think you may deny him to-day as you did yesterday; for he may suffer those abuses from you many years, and be highly provoked against you in his own breast, though his anger break not out in your destruction presently. Take heed you trifle not and mistake, till God vow your deprivation, for then you are irrecoverably lost. These Israelites were going to a temporal Canaan, and so died only temporally, (for ought we know,) and lost only that pleasant land. But we are invited to a heavenly rest, and if we provoke God as they did, our loss is ten thousand times greater, and we must die eternally. Acquaint yourselves therefore with God's ways, and do not delight in such destroying mistakes

<sup>m</sup> 1 Cor. x. 11. Omne quod evenit patribus signum fuit filiis. Moses Gerund. in Gen. xii.

as these. He is merciful to those that obey him, and will perform all the expectations of his faithful servants; but those that presume he should do so to them, and yet continue to stop their ears, though he spare them long, yet he will cut them off at last; which being so certain, and having so plain an example this day propounded to you, I hope you will this day hearken to the invitations that you hear out of God's  
 82 word, and resolve now to begin a new course of life: and if this have so good an effect, you will have great cause to bless God for sparing you so long, warning you so seriously, and giving you this one effectual call more, and then you may well conclude this Divine hymn with *Glory be to the Father, &c. As it was in the beginning, &c.* Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the XCVth Psalm.*

Verse 1. O COME with all speed, and LET US who are here met together in the house of God, with loud and cheerful voices SING UNTO THE LORD, and having our affections raised by the remembrance of his mercy, LET US not only outwardly and vocally, but inwardly and HEARTILY REJOICE in him that is the rock of our defence, the foundation of our hope, and THE STRENGTH on which we rely for the fruition OF OUR SALVATION.

Ver. 2. He is present everywhere, but especially there where we assemble to worship him, therefore LET US COME into his house, where we are immediately BEFORE HIS PRESENCE, having our hearts filled WITH THANKSGIVING and gratitude for all his favours: and the more to set forth his love, and quicken our brethren, let us openly rejoice AND SHEW OURSELVES GLAD IN HIM, not with any vain mirth, but WITH PSALMS, which are indited by his Spirit, and appointed by the church as forms of our daily praises.

Ver. 3. And we have great reason to glorify him with heart and voice, FOR THE LORD Jehovah, he IS A GREAT GOD, infinite and incomprehensible in his essence, he is supreme and absolute in his dominion, AND A GREAT KING commanding

over angels of heaven, devils of hell, and the greatest earthly monarchs, being far ABOVE ALL that are supposed or called GODS, and therefore deserves a nobler worship than is given to any creature.

Ver. 4. He is not limited in his providence to one city, or confined to a single province, but IN HIS HAND and power, under his rule and government, ARE ALL THE remotest and most secret CORNERS OF THE EARTH; no place is too far for his reach, too deep for his discovery, or too strong for his power, for the height AND THE STRENGTH OF THE HILLS which are inaccessible to men, these ARE HIS ALSO, and serve for the bulwarks of his kingdom.

Ver. 5. He is the Lord of all the world, and commandeth over that unruly abyss of waters THE SEA, which he binds in fetters of sand, that it should not harm us; he hath given it to us, and makes it serve our needs, because it IS HIS by an unquestionable title; for he created AND HE MADE IT, and therefore ought to give laws to it, and dispose of it and all the earth, because he took away the covering of waters from the ground, AND HIS HANDS made herbs and fruits, birds and beasts, and so furnished and PREPARED THE DRY LAND to be an habitation for the sons of men.

Ver. 6. O COME then, since we have so gracious and all-sufficient a God, LET US not only praise him for what we have, but also pray unto him and WORSHIP him for the relief of all our necessities, with all possible zeal and sincerity in our hearts, and with all lowliness and reverence in our postures; let us bow AND FALL DOWN ON OUR faces, AND KNEEL to so glorious a King, behaving ourselves most humbly BEFORE THE LORD who is able to do all things, and being OUR MAKER, deserves to be worshipped with both soul and body.

Ver. 7. And our peculiar interest in him may encourage us to pray to him, FOR HE IS THE LORD in whom we believe, who calleth himself OUR GOD, and although he made all men, yet he hath especially made himself known to us, AND WE ARE THE PEOPLE whom he feeds with his word and sacraments, and whom he hath chosen to be the flock OF HIS PASTURE, for he himself doth watch over us day and night, to secure us from sin and Satan; we are his especial subjects, AND THE SHEEP that shall ever be preserved by the care of his eye, and the

power OF HIS HAND, if we come at his call, and hearken to his voice.

83 Ver. 8. O ye peculiar people of God, observe therefore how his ministers and his Spirit do every day invite you to repentance, saying, **TO-DAY**, after you have lost so many days, and have so few remaining; while this day is in your power, it will be well for you **IF YE WILL HEAR** and obey **HIS VOICE**, and that he may not call in vain, take heed you wilfully **HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS** by delighting in the pleasures of sin, by doubting of the promises, or slighting the threatenings of God; for the event will be as sad **AS IN THE PROVOCATION** of the Divine anger by the unbelieving Israelites at Meribah, **AND AS IN THE DAY** of their presumptuous **TEMPTATION** of God's patience at Massah **IN THE WILDERNESS** of Sin, after they came out of Egypt.

Ver. 9. This example God set before the posterity of those obstinate Jews, saying to them, (as now he doth to you,) Remember the time **WHEN YOUR FATHERS**, in whom you glory, disobeyed my commands, questioned my providence, and durst not trust my promises, but **TEMPTED ME** by requiring miracles from me to satisfy their lusts, and by this they supposed to have **PROVED ME** and made trial of my power and love; although they received a miraculous deliverance, **AND SAW** all the rest of **MY WORKS**, which were so wonderful, they would have convinced any but such stubborn wretches.

Ver. 10. For all this I forbore them (as I have done some of you) full **FORTY YEARS**, and spared them from utter destruction, yet still they were rebellious as at first, **SO LONG WAS I GRIEVED** with the perverseness of **THIS GENERATION**. At last, when nothing would amend them, I declared my utter detestation of them, **AND SAID** of those whom I had once chosen, **IT IS A PEOPLE** whom nothing can reclaim, a refractory crew **THAT DO ERR IN THEIR HEARTS** concerning me, imagining me faithless and false, or weak and impotent; and no wonder, **FOR THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN**, nor never would observe **MY WAYS**, viz. to destroy presumptuous sinners, but to give grace and glory to holy and humble men which put their trust in me.

Ver. 11. Wherefore I warn you all to take heed lest you refuse to hear my voice, and neglect to repent to-day; for so

you will provoke me to deal with you, as I did with them, UNTO WHOM I SWARE, and steadfastly resolved IN MY WRATH, being justly incensed at their baseness, THAT THEY SHOULD all perish in the wilderness, and for all their confidence, that one of them should NOT ENTER INTO the blessed land of promise, nor partake of MY REST: so I cut them off for disobedience and unbelief, and I will keep all such out of the heavenly Jerusalem. Lo, I have said it, that you may be warned and turn in time. *Glory be to the Father, &c. As it was in the beginning, &c.*

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## SECTION VIII.

84

OF THE DAILY USE OF THE PSALMS IN MORNING AND  
EVENING PRAYER.

§. I. THE Book of Psalms seems to be a collection of those devout hymns wherewith holy men did praise God upon public or private occasions, being fitted to all conditions of the church, and of particular persons also. They are Divine prayers and praises indited by the Spirit of God, with such admirable variety, that we may easily collect a form from thence, either to petition for any thing we need, or to glorify the name of God for any mercy we have received. Wherefore they are used and commended by Christians, Jews, and Mahometans also. And although we have many differences among the several parties that are called Christians, yet all agree to make use of these incomparable and sacred anthems; so that Cassander designed to compose a liturgy out of them, that might serve his purpose of universal accommodation, and be received by all Christians. This joint consent and universal approbation will make it needless to spend much time to commend what all admire. Yet it were easy to reckon

up those excellent titles<sup>a</sup> and honourable characters<sup>b</sup> which have been given them. They are called the instrument of virtue, the marrow of divinity, the storehouse of devotion, the epitome of holy scripture. They contain excellent forms to bless the people, to praise God, to rejoice in his favour, to bewail his absence, to confess our faith, to crave pardon of our sins, deliverance from our enemies, and all blessings for the church of God. In the use of them we ought to exercise all graces, repentance and faith, love and fear of God, charity to all men, and compassion to the miserable. The composure of them declares they are fitted for men of all ages and degrees, in all estates and conditions, young and old; kings, priests, and people; in prosperity and adversity; here they may find that which so exactly suits them all, as if their condition had been foreseen and particularly provided for: and if any who grant this shall except, That many of the Psalms are not applicable to their condition, I shall confidently affirm, That as devout men in their enjoyment of the Divine favour can be humbled in using the complaints for want of it which were uttered by better men, and thereby they are moved to see what they deserve, and to consider what many of their brethren want; so on the contrary, a pious man under trouble of spirit can, by the spiritual rejoicings there described, behold the goodness of God to others, and foresee his own deliverance, receiving thereby additions to his faith, hope, and patience. He that forgives his enemies, and wisheth well to all particular persons, may repeat those curses

<sup>a</sup> Virtutum organum, Ambr. Theologiæ compendium, Basil. Epitome totius Scripturæ, Athan. Parva Biblia, Luth.

<sup>b</sup> Psalmus benedictio populi

est, Dei laus, plebis laudatio, plausus omnium, sermo universorum, vox ecclesiæ, fidei canora confessio, &c. Vid. Ambr. Præf. ad Psal.

delivered in this book, as predictions of the miseries like to befall the inveterate enemies of religion, or as deprecations against sin and Satan, and all the spiritual enemies of our souls, which are the Amalek with whom we must have an endless war, and whose extirpation we must endeavour and pray for. The like might be said of all the rest in all other cases; but this may suffice to justify the church in more frequent using these Psalms than any other part of God's word, because this is the quintessence of all scripture<sup>c</sup>, and most accommodated for worship and devotion: so it was esteemed by the Jews, and therefore the greatest part of the temple-service consisted of forms contrived out of the Psalms, and committed to the masters of the choir, who used those forms<sup>d</sup>, and praised God by them long after David's time, 2 Chron. xxix. 30; yea, at this very day their Liturgy is an extract principally out of<sup>e</sup> these Psalms<sup>e</sup>; and no man is ignorant how constantly the primitive Christians used them in their assemblies<sup>f</sup>, insomuch that the very women, the children, and meanest mechanics<sup>g</sup>, could say them by heart, and sang them at home and abroad, even about their labours; making them at once the exercise of their piety, and the refreshment of their minds, recreating themselves and glorifying God; and hereby they had answers ready to

<sup>c</sup> Historia instruit, lex docet, prophetia annunciat, correptio castigat, moralitas suadet, in libro Psalmorum profectus omnium est. Ambr. ut supra.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Chron. xvi. 7. ad ver. 37. collected out of the cv. xcvi. and cvi. Psalms. Ab eo tempore ordinarie posthac Deus fuit celebratus Psalmis et sacra musica. Osiander. See 1 Chron. xxv. 2.

<sup>e</sup> Et versus alios complures e Psalmis Davidicis recitare solent,

&c. Buxt. Synag. cap. 5.

<sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 26. Coloss. iii. 16.

<sup>g</sup> Ἐτερός τις τοὺς τοῦ Δαβὶδ ψαλλέτω ὕμνους, καὶ ὁ λαὸς τὰ ἀκροστίχαι ὑποψαλλέτω. Const. Apost. lib. 2. cap. 57.

<sup>h</sup> Psalmorum oracula et domi canunt et in foro circumferunt. Basil. in Psal. i. See Euseb. Hist. lib. 9. cap. 1; and more fully Dr. Hammond's Preface to the Psalms.



oppose to all Satan's temptations, and the most illiterate might pray to God, or praise him, in any circumstances, by a form of his own inditing. How happy should we be, if we were now as perfect in them! The best way to be so is to frequent the church daily where they are used, and there we shall at once be refreshed with the music, and instructed by the frequent recital of them; we shall at the same time be pleased and profited; we shall have holy principles<sup>h</sup> conveyed into our minds with pleasure.

§. II. And for this cause, I suppose, the music which these sacred songs were first set to, is still continued in the church, (as it was among the Jews and best Christians<sup>i</sup>), which ought to mind us of the music of the celestial choir, and will calm our souls, and gently raise our affections<sup>k</sup>, putting us into a fit posture to glorify our Father which is in heaven, and sweetening these pious lessons, that will take the deeper root when the heart is first mollified and prepared to receive them; for sure he is of a rugged temper, and hath an ill-composed soul, who feels not these effects of that grave and pleasant harmony which doth accompany this office; and we may fear he is not of David's spirit, whose ears are offended, whose spirit is disturbed, or his devotion hindered, by vocal or instrumental music. But, O ye prudent and pious Christians, who bring no prejudices against these things, you know how oft your souls have been rapt up with ecstasies of devotion, and your minds filled with ideas of the celestial glory, and your hearts inflamed with strong affections, by these

<sup>h</sup> O sapiens doctoris inventum, qui simul canere, et utilia nos discere excogitavit! Basil. ut supra.

<sup>i</sup> Ad s. altare iterum rediens Psalmorum incipit melos, concin-

nentibus secum sacra carmina omnibus ecclesiastici ordinis gradibus. Dionys. Areop. cap. 3. Vid. item Euseb. lib. 2. cap. 17. Eccl. Hist.

<sup>k</sup> Grotius in 1 Sam. x. 5.

sweet strains. Wherefore do you endeavour (when you are so disposed by the church-music) with fervency and holy ardours to bless the name of God: and be sure you never omit to bear a part yourselves in heart, or voice, or both; for so the church requires, and so the people of God in all ages<sup>1</sup> have sung their hymns by turns and<sup>o</sup> responses, supposing by this means they might best stir up each other's affections, and come nearest to the heavenly pattern, where the seraphims cry one to another, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts*, Isai. vi. 3. And Socrates relates that Ignatius learned this way of singing from the angels, and he first delivered it to the Christian church<sup>m</sup>, which ever since doth zealously imitate them here, hoping to bear a part with them in their eternal Hallelujahs. But our designed brevity will allow us no further to press these things, because our principal aim is to help devotion, not satisfy curiosity; and therefore we will now treat of the means to use the daily Psalms to the benefit of our souls.

§. III. There is not any part of Divine service that might be of more general advantage than the use of the Psalms, if due care were taken by us of three things:

1. To be fitly disposed for them before we begin.
2. To be suitably affected when we are about them.
3. To retain firmly those affections afterwards: concerning each of which something must be said.

First, For preparation, it is most certain that our hearts are like an instrument out of tune, and if we

<sup>1</sup> Omnes enim ad sanctum Psalmum—devoto et veraciorde respondimus. Aug. Ver. Apost. Serm. xii.

<sup>m</sup> Ὅπτασίαν εἶδεν ἀγγέλων διὰ τῶν ἀντιφώνων ὕμνων τῇ ἁγίαν τρι-

ἄδα ὑμνοῦντων, καὶ τὸν τρόπον τοῦ ὁράματος τῇ ἐν τῇ Ἀντιοχείᾳ ἐκκλησίᾳ παρέδωκεν, ὅθεν καὶ ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις αὕτη ἡ παράδοσις ἐδόθη. Socrat. Eccl. Hist. lib. 6, cap. 8.

begin the melody of the Psalms before we have screwed up our affections, and set them to the right key, we shall make an displeasing discord; for which cause the foregoing offices of repentance are prudently appointed to be first performed; that we being thereby mollified and wound up into a frame of devotion, may say, *Our hearts are ready to sing and give praise*, Psalm cviii. 1. And certainly we shall find the devout performance of the penitential part will incomparably fit us to say, or sing David's Psalms with David's spirit. For having confessed humbly, begged forgiveness earnestly, and received the news of our absolution thankfully, our hearts will be replenished with contrition and lowliness; and we shall find our spirits tender, our desires strong, our affections elevated and fixed upon those things that are above. Then the comforts and promises will cheer us; our sense of the wants of our brethren, and our own necessities, will give wings to all the petitions; our apprehensions of God's goodness in Christ Jesus will beget such entire love to him, that our very souls shall mingle with our praises: how easy and how deep impressions will all these make upon the heart of a true penitent, which an unrepentant man is not at all affected with! Consult but your own experience, which will convince you, that when, by some sharp affliction or serious preparation, (before the sacrament, or the like,) your affections have been moved to an humble and hearty repetition of the public confession, then your heart is much affected with David's devout prayers and thanksgivings, and you easily apply them to your own case without a monitor, and so you might be disposed every day, if you did daily confess your sins with the same affections and dispositions. But we must prepare, not only to *sing with the spirit*, but *with understanding also*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15; and there-

fore let us use all means we can<sup>n</sup> to know the meaning of these holy Psalms, which is not difficult to do; especially so far to understand them, as to be able to know when David exhorts us, or praises God, or prays to him, that we may join with him in a right manner. And indeed a diligent attention will make that sufficiently plain, especially if we have seriously considered them in private.

Secondly, For suitable affections in the reading or singing of them, we must take notice, that there is something more required in these Psalms than in other parts of holy writ: for other parts of scripture are read to us, and it sufficeth that we be careful to hear them reverently and attentively, willing to be instructed by them, and resolved to be obedient to them. But here we ourselves do bear a part, and we are to speak them as our own words<sup>o</sup>; we must pray for what is here desired, and praise God for those mercies which are here recorded; and this requires both an extraordinary attention, and also a suitable disposition of mind to the matter of the Psalm which we are repeating: so that it is necessary that we consider the subject of each of these Divine canticles, and endeavour to get our hearts into a temper agreeing<sup>p</sup> thereunto, and so we shall sing these Psalms with such a spirit as they were composed<sup>q</sup>: which blessed frame that Holy Spirit which

<sup>n</sup> I advise those that are of ability, capacity, and leisure, to read the Psalms for the day privately in D. Hammond's excellent paraphrase before they go to church: and for others to use the lord Hatton's Psalms with the prayers fitted to them in the same manner.

<sup>o</sup> Τὴν βίβλον ταύτην ὁ λαμβάνων, ψάλλουσιν ὡν ἰδίους ὄντας λόγους ἀναγινώσκει. Athan. — Ὡς ἴδια ῥή-

ματα λαλῶν ἐστί καὶ ὡς περὶ αὐτοῦ γραφέντας αὐτοὺς ἕκαστος ψάλλει. Idem.

<sup>p</sup> Tuum spiritum affectu Psalmi forma; si affectus sit amoris ama, si timoris time, &c. Aug. in Psal. xxx.

<sup>q</sup> Ad fruendum hunc thesaurum necesse est eodem spiritu Psalmos dicere quo fuerunt compositi. Cassian. Collat. 10. cap. 10.

first indited them can only beget in us; and no tongue can tell what infinite delight, and ravishing pleasures, and mighty advantages we might then find in this employment. Wherefore having desired the assistance of the Divine grace, be careful, first, to let your hearts go along with the matter of every Psalm, and, secondly, to apply the *Gloria Patri* at the end of every Psalm, according as the subject doth require; in which perhaps these general directions may be helpful to you. Observe, there are four sorts of Psalms: 1. Psalms of instruction; 2. of exhortation; 3. of supplication; 4. of thanksgiving: and though many are mixed composures, containing all or most of these, yet all that is in any of them may be referred to one of these heads; and the devout Christian may learn by the following rules to suit himself for any of them, whether single or together.

- 87 1. The Psalms of instruction are plain explications of, and profitable meditations upon, some point of religion; as about the creation and works of God, Psalm viii. and civ; about his providence, Psalm xxxvii. and cxxxix. and cxlvii; concerning Christ his passion, Psalm xxii. and lxix; his resurrection and ascension, Psalm ii. and xvi. and cx; or his coming to judgment, Psalm i. and xcvi. &c. Now in these and the like Psalms we must make a hearty confession of our belief of these articles, we must be thankful to him that revealed them, and be careful to express those practical inferences that are drawn from them in our lives and conversations, heartily desiring we may live by these holy principles of truth. In these we must exercise especially faith and love, concluding them with giving *glory to the Father*, who hath made us partakers of a right faith in his Son by his Spirit; and remembering that every person of this glorious Trinity joins in these emi-

nent works of creation, providence, redemption, and sanctification; let us heartily praise God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for all that is done or designed for the sons of men. Let thy soul say, O Lord, I confess the truth of these things, I believe them fully, and I admire them highly, and will ever love thee for declaring them: I acknowledge thy power in creating, thy bounty in sustaining, thy wisdom in ordering, and thy mercy in relieving and preserving all the world; I discern thy love in our redemption, I hope in thy might for a resurrection to life, and I trust in thy mercy for a share in thy kingdom, *Glory be to the Father, &c.* for all this.

2. The Psalms of exhortation are serious admonitions backed with powerful motives, convincing arguments, and clear examples; by which we are stirred either to some acts of moral virtue, Psalm xv. and ci. or to some duties of positive religion; to fear God, or study his law, or observe his will, Psalm i. and xxxiv. and cxix; or else we are warned against sin by threatenings and examples, Psalm vii. and lviii. and lxiv; particularly against distrust in God, by the history of his providence over his own people, Psalm lxxviii. cv. cvi. That we may profit by these, we must weigh the promises and motives to holiness so seriously, that we may be convinced of our folly in neglecting these duties, and resolved to set upon the sincere performance of them; and also we must consider the evils that are appointed for and threatened to all sorts of sins, and the sad instances and examples of sinners that have been made miserable thereby, till we find our hearts moved with fear and penitence, and till we have taken up purposes of speedy forsaking those dangerous courses: so that here we are to exercise humility and repentance, fear of God, and pious resolutions; which being finished,

in the doxology there is a superadded act of praise, to the Father for sparing us, to the Son for interceding for us, and to the Holy Ghost for warning and convincing us; and this *Glory be to the Father, &c.* doth declare, you are thankful for the admonition, resolved to take warning, and full of hopes of the Divine assistance to help you to forsake the evil and follow the good. In these Psalms take the same resolutions which holy David did, and encourage yourselves with the same hopes, love what he loves, desire what he longed for, believe and expect what he promiseth to himself, hate what he hated, take warning by what he observed, and fear the same sad event, if you go on in the same way with those sinners that are made examples to you; evermore praising God for those gracious discoveries, and saying, *Glory be, &c.*

3. The Psalms of supplication are most ardent petitions for all good things for yourselves, your brethren, and the whole church, in all circumstances and upon all occasions. These are private prayers for pardon of sin, Ps. xxv. and li. and cxliii; for restauration to God's favour, Ps. iv. and xlii. and lxiii; for patience in trouble, Psalm xxxix; for deliverance from spiritual or temporal enemies, Psalm lv. lix. lxxi. and lxxiv: and also public prayers for the king, Psalm xxi. and lxxii; for the church and people of God, Psalm lxviii. lxxix. and lxxx. and such like; which that we may be fitly disposed for, we must have a quick and feeling sense of our own and our brethren's wants, a firm belief of God's all-sufficiency, a strong confidence in the intercession of Jesus Christ, and a full persuasion of the acceptableness of these requests which are drawn up by the Holy Ghost. And these devout prayers will give us occa-  
88 sion to shew our care of our own souls, and our universal charity to all the world, our love to God's church,

and our entire dependence on his power and mercy; and may fitly be closed with a giving *Glory to the Father*, who heareth us; *to the Son*, who pleads for us in heaven; *and to the Holy Ghost*, who directs and assists us on earth: and we have cause to bless him who hath heard both ours and others' prayers, and will do so to the end of the world, giving all persons in all ages past, present, and to come, great cause of eucharist and thanksgiving. By this *Gloria Patri* added to our prayers, we declare our confidence and hope, that he will grant us our desires, who is, and was, and ever shall be, the helper of all that flee to him for succour; and we may call to mind that many are now praising him in heaven, for hearing these very petitions that we now put up. Art thou poor or miserable, sick or weak, despised or slandered, persecuted or oppressed? Here thou mayest breathe out thy complaints to him that can help thee, or those that are so. Art thou under trouble of conscience, or fear of God's anger, worsted by temptation, or sluggish in holy duties, or any ways spiritually indisposed? Here are most proper and pertinent forms for thy comfort and redress. Art thou a well-wisher to all the world, a lover of God's people, a friend to the peace of kingdoms, and a faithful subject to thy own prince? Hast thou any detestation against sinners, or desire of their conversion, any pity for the calamitous, or wishes for their deliverance? If thou bring a charitable heart, thou mayest pray for all or any of these in such prevailing words, that, ere thou hast done speaking, thou mayest have such assurance of a gracious return, as to sing, *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

4. The Psalms of thanksgiving are joyful songs of praise and eucharist, and lovely descriptions of the Divine goodness to all the world, but especially to us



and all his own people. Such are those wherein God is praised for all his mercies, Psalm ciii. cxxxvi. and cxlv: for those bestowed on our bodies; health, Psalm cxvi. and cxxx, and plenty, Psalm lxv. and civ; victories over our enemies, Psalm xviii. cxliv. and cxlix; as also for what he hath done for our souls, Psalm lxvi. cxi. cxviii. And in these Psalms are most earnest exhortations to join in praising his holy name, and most exact characters of all God's gracious dealings with us and all mankind. Wherefore that we may join in heart and voice, let us be fully sensible of our baseness and unworthiness, let us be mightily convinced of God's goodness to us and others, and deeply affected with the freeness, frequency, and fulness of his mercies and favours; for here we are to exercise love and gratitude, we are to imitate the choir of heaven, who survey the whole world, and pay the tribute of glory to him, whose mercy and goodness they see and admire in every thing, and so must we; and then our souls shall readily comply with David's courteous invitations to *bless the Lord*. O my God, I behold what thou dost for all mankind, and what I have received; I confess my unworthiness, and admire thy goodness in all things. And then the *Glory be to the Father*, &c. is a recapitulation of all the foregoing causes of glorifying every person in the glorious Trinity, and must be an acknowledgment that all mercies are dispensed to us by the Father, for the Son's sake, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit; and upon this account all honour and glory *is*, and *was*, and *ever shall be* due to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. O my ingrateful heart, which seest so much cause of praising God every day for his works, for his goodness to others, and thyself also, and hast thou not yet learned fully to love God, and constantly to praise him? Come to the sweet singer of Israel, he will excite thee (by

his example) in *every thing to give thanks* ; learn of him *to rejoice with them that rejoice* ; learn of him to love, and sing *Glory be, &c.* ; so thou shalt sing new songs in the new Jerusalem for ever. By such means as these we ought to tune our hearts for this heavenly music, if we would have it please God and profit us ; and if by the help of God's good Spirit we have in some measure well performed this, our next care must be that we lose not those good affections.

Thirdly, Therefore endeavour to nourish these holy <sup>89</sup> flames on the altar of thy heart by such a life as the inspired penmen of these Psalms themselves did lead<sup>r</sup>, and such as they exhort others to ; so shalt thou be every day fit to join in this office, and be always prepared to accompany the church with suitable affections in all the several parts of Psalmody. Remember these anthems are designed, not only to raise devotion in public, but to assist holiness in private<sup>s</sup>, and by letting us feel comforts in God's house, which may strengthen us to do his will afterwards, and which may set us upon our guard against sin and Satan, who present sensual pleasures and carnal allurements unto us ; but you who have tasted sweeter and nobler delights, will easily despise those vain and empty shadows, and wish no other joy than to praise God among his servants on earth here, and among his saints in heaven hereafter. And if this be your desire, the constant use of these Psalms will make them so familiar, that you will never want holy meditations, ejaculations, answers to Satan's temptations, and mementos of a holy life, even after you are departed from the congregation.

<sup>r</sup> Τοιοῦτον δὲ καὶ σὺ ζηλώσεις βίον λαλήσαντες ἄνδρες ἅγιοι. Athanas.  
οἷον ἔσχον οἱ ταῦτα θεοφορούμενοι <sup>s</sup> Verba vivenda non legenda.

## SECTION IX.

## OF THE LESSONS.

§. I. BEFORE we begin to read or hear the holy scriptures, it will be useful that we consider, first, their own excellency, to engage our love to them. Secondly, the providence of God in the composing and preserving them, to excite our reverence. Thirdly, the care of the church in fitting them to our use, to encourage our diligence. First, the scripture must needs be excellent, because it is the revelation of the whole will of God, so far as is necessary for our salvation. We believe as God hath taught us, and as it was believed in the primitive church<sup>a</sup>, that it is the complete repository of all Divine truths that concern faith or manners; and therefore we own it to be the rule of our lives, and the foundation of our faith; and in all our considerable<sup>b</sup> controversies we place it in the throne (as the councils of Ephesus and Aquileia did) for the moderator and determiner of such doubts and differences. This is the guide of our consciences, the ground of our hopes, the evidence of our inheritance, and the law by which we shall be judged at the last day, John v. 45. Rev. xx. 12. Wherefore it is the duty (John v. 39.) and interest (2 Tim. iii. 15.) of every Christian to be conversant in them, according to the command of Jesus, and the example of all God's servants, who studied them more than any other writings: so that St. Basil and his friend

<sup>a</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 15. In quibus inveniuntur illa omnia quæ continent fidem moresque vivendi. August. Doct. Christ. lib. 2. cap. 17. Sacræ et divinitus inspiratæ scripturæ per se abunde sufficiunt ad veritatis indicationem. Athan. in Idol. Antiquam

fidei regulam. Euseb. Hist. lib. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Sancta synodus Christum assessorem capitis loco adjunxit: venerandum enim evangelium in sancto throno collocavit. Cyril. See Dr. Cosin's History of the Canon.

used no other book, but wholly meditated in this for thirteen years. And if it were possible, we should exercise ourselves in them *day and night*<sup>c</sup>, that is, always. But however we must spend so much time upon them, that we may be always furnished with precepts to direct, promises to encourage, and examples to quicken us to do all good; and also with prohibitions to restrain, threatenings to affright, and presidents to warn us from all evil. And being so constantly useful, and so able to shew us all that is necessary to be known, believed, or to be done, we should love them, and delight to hear and know them, because ignorance of these sacred oracles will lay us open to errors in judgment (Mark xii. 24.) and wickedness in practice, (Psalm cxix. 3.) and finally prove the ruin of our souls.

§. II. Secondly, We must remember it is no ordinary regard which we must give to these holy pages, because God is the author, and his Spirit the inditer of them, and in his infinite wisdom and love he hath committed his will to writing, that it might not be corrupted or impaired by the prejudices, the malice, or forgetfulness of men, as all traditions generally are. For the matter of it, though he could have filled it with amazing mysteries, yet (consulting our good rather than his own greatness) he condescends to our capacities<sup>d</sup>, imitates our phrases, complies with our notions, and hath laid down all necessary and fundamental truths so clearly, that the meanest may understand them; and yet in more curious points hath left such difficulties as may

<sup>c</sup> Josh. i. 8. Deut. xvii. 19. R. Ismael a sororis filio rogatus, quodnam tempus Græcorum lectioni impenderet? Resp. Nul- lum; nisi potest inveniri tempus quod nec ad diem neque ad noc- tem pertinebat. E Talm. Masius in Jos. i.

<sup>d</sup> Lex loquitur nobiscum lin- gua filiorum hominum: Lumen supernum nunquam descendit sine indumento. Prov. Rab. Sermo enim divinus secundum intelligentiæ nostræ naturam se temperat, — nobis enim non sibi loquitur. Hilar. in Psal. xxvi.

exercise the wits, and allay the arrogance of the most knowing men. Nor hath he in any one part set down every thing that is directly tending to our salvation; but to engage us diligently to read it all, he hath so prudently dispersed these necessary things, that some of them are to be found every where; so that every part thereof is useful, and none of it must be neglected, much less contemned<sup>e</sup>. For like as in high hills the outward barrenness is recompensed by mines and hidden treasures<sup>f</sup>, so the most difficult places yield profit to those that have skill and patience to dig into them. And the Almighty hath not only shewed his care in the forming, but also in the preserving of these sacred records; which, though they are the most ancient in the world (of undoubted credit), and have been hated and opposed by Satan and his instruments, the great and wise ones of the world, yet neither time, power, policy, nor malice, could ever corrupt nor destroy them, because God resolved to preserve them for our use, *upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

§. III. Thirdly, The church hath done her part, in compliance with the designs of God's mercy and providence, to deliver it safely to us, and make it useful for us: for hereby the catholic and faithful Christians discovered the frauds of heretics, convinced the minds of unbelievers, and sealed the truth of it with their blood. And lest any should pretend ignorance<sup>g</sup>, the governors and lights of the church have carefully translated the original scripture into all languages, that every nation

<sup>e</sup> Nullane verecundia tibi est, dicere eorum quæ Deus ipse loquitur, nullam esse cognitionis utilitatem? Chrysost. Otiosum autem verbum dicere in S. Scriptura ingens blasphemia est. Basil.

<sup>f</sup> Matt. v. 18. Non est litera

in lege a qua non pendeant magni montes. Dictum Rab.

<sup>g</sup> Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ Ἑλλήνων φωνῇ ἐρμηνεύθησαν αἱ γραφαὶ ὥς μὴ πρόσφασις ἀγνοίας προβάλλεσθαι δύνηθαι. Clem. Alex. Strom. 1.

might hear in their *own tongue the wonderful works of God*, (Acts ii. 11.) After which pattern our church hath made that elaborate, exact, and faithful translation into the English tongue, the like to which is not in any nation<sup>h</sup>. And now the scripture hath learned our language, that it may instruct us in our own words; and it must be wilful negligence if we do not understand it. To prevent which, we are enjoined to read or hear it every day, both at morning and at evening prayer, according to the practice of the Jews<sup>i</sup>, who read the Law in their synagogues however on the Sabbath, and on other days they tasted no food, till they had read a section of it either in public or private<sup>k</sup>; and every man knows how solemnly and constantly this hath ever been done in all the assemblies of the Christian church<sup>l</sup>. For hence they confirmed their opinions in doctrine<sup>m</sup>, and learned lessons of holiness in conversation. I had rather your own observation should inform you, than spend time to tell you how carefully this church hath selected the most practical and pertinent chapters; omitting the more difficult, or rather remitting them to private consideration, where you have more leisure. The lessons suited to the solemn festivals are determined<sup>n</sup>, and do either explain the mystery, relate the history, or apply the example unto us. In fine, the good-91

<sup>h</sup> Anglicanæ versionis authores omni laude majores fuisse arguit accurata illa et ad invidiam aliarum gentium elaborata versio. Sixt. Amama Præf. ad Drus.

<sup>i</sup> Acts xiii. 17. 1 Cor. iii. 15. Luke iv. 7. Neh. viii. 8.

<sup>k</sup> Ita fecerunt Christiani, teste Clem. Alex.

<sup>l</sup> Διάκονος μέγα βῶων Προσῆκωμεν, et paulo post Τάδε λέγει κύριος. Chrys. ad Act. ix. 19.

COMBER, VOL. I.

<sup>m</sup> Coimus ad literarum divinarum commemorationem. Ter. Apol. cap. 39. Ἦδε τῶν γραφῶν τῶν κυριακῶν ἀνάγνωσις εἰς ἀπόδειξιν τῶν λεγομένων ἀναγκαίων. Clem. Alex. Strom. 6.

<sup>n</sup> Nunc interposita est sollemnitas sanctorum dierum, quibus certas ex evangelio lectiones oportet in Ecclesia tractari. Aug. Præf. in Joan.

ness of God in revealing, and his power in preserving these holy books; as also the church's courage in defending them, exactness in translating, and prudence in dividing them, shew it is the great concern of all Christians to understand them, and their duty to use them: for there is nothing wanting to make us *wise to salvation*, but our diligent endeavour to profit by them. And that this grace of God and care of the church be not bestowed on you in vain, we shall desire you to observe the following directions:

§. IV. First, it is necessary, that we humbly and earnestly call for the assistance of the Divine Spirit, which, as it did first indite, so it can best explain these oracles of truth, and also enable us to practise them. Now this may be done by a short and pathetical ejaculation, while the minister prepares himself to read; and if we are not ready at making such forms, we may repeat Psalm cxix. 180, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law*: or ver. 125, *I am thy servant, give me understanding that I may know thy testimonies*: or, if you have time, you may pray by that excellent Collect (the second in order) for the second Sunday of Advent, *Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy scripture &c.* Now by these prayers we shall own God to be the Fountain of all wisdom, and express our desires to know and do his will, and therefore no doubt they will procure us wisdom and strength. Secondly, labour to bring a heart purified from the love of all sin, for a lamb only can open the seals of this book, (Rev. v. 2.) The Mahometans write on the cover of the Alcoran, *Non attingat nisi sanctus*, "Let no unclean person touch this;" which better agrees to God's word; so that we shall do well to engrave it on our memories, and then we give the signification of that rite of washing the hands before the taking it up, which the Chris-

tians<sup>o</sup> observed of old, and the Turks at this day. We cast not our seed into untilled grounds, and let us not cast the more precious seed of the Divine word into unhallowed hearts, (Jer. iv. 3. Matt. xiii. 4, 5, &c.) lest it be choked with weeds, or overrun with thorns, or parched for want of root in us. The love of sin blinds the eyes, vitiates the palate, and alters the object; it will make this Divine food nauseous, or turn it into the nourishment of corrupt humours. He only profits by God's word, that brings a pure and clean heart; he sees God's will clearly, loves it exceedingly, closes with it readily, because it suits his inclinations and sympathizes with his affections, so that it brings its welcome along with it. Thirdly, come with holy desires to learn your duty, and steadfast resolutions to practise it. The end of writing the scripture must be our aim in hearing it, viz. that we may be wiser and better. The philosopher complained of some that did read Plato, not to reform their manners, but to adorn their discourse<sup>p</sup>; but we have juster cause to complain of those that hear God's holy word, to make them more talkative, and not more holy. It is not phrases, but virtue, which we ought to learn there. We must, like good soldiers, stand with our loins girt, our arms fixed, expecting only the watchword, and then we must obey. Let us say, *Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth*, (1 Sam. iii. 10.) and with St. Paul, (Acts ix. 8.) *Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?* And when he hath in his word signified his pleasure, our souls must answer, (Exod. xix. 8.) *All that the Lord hath spoken, that will we do.* It had been a strange presumption in David to have consulted

<sup>o</sup> Chrysost. Hom. 52. in Evang. Joan.

<sup>p</sup> Est etiam (proh Jupiter!) qui Platonem legere postulet,

non vitæ ornandæ, sed linguæ et orationis comendæ gratia, non ut modestior fiat, sed lepidior. Taur. apud Aul. Gell. Noct. Attic. 1.9.



the oracle about his safety, (1 Sam. xxiii. 2, 12.) unless he had purposed to obey the answer. And it is an equal affront to the Divine Majesty, for us to pretend we come to ask his advice, when we have no intentions to follow it.

§. V. Being thus prepared before by prayer, purity, and holy resolutions, when the lessons are begun; fourthly, let us hear them with all reverence, according to that excellent example of those devout Jews, (Nehem. viii. 6.) who, when the Law was read to them, *lifted up their hands, bowed down their heads, and fell on their faces.* And sure we should express such outward respects as may declare we are mindful of the Author of these proclamations, who is King of kings and Lord of lords. The scripture daily salutes us, as  
 92 Ehud did the king of Moab, (Judges iii. 20.) *I have a message to thee from God.* And if the tyrant at that news rose from his seat, shall not he condemn us, if we receive it with less signs of regard and reverence? But especially let us labour to fill our minds with serious apprehensions, that it is the word, the will, and mind of the great God<sup>q</sup>, and then we shall express our outward reverence with more ease and sincerity. Let us receive it as being truly his, (1 Thess. ii. 13.) and it will work as effectually as if it came with the terrors of mount Sinai, or were delivered in thunder from the battlements of heaven. And the better to affect your heart, behold the evident demonstrations that God is in and with them. Think how many sad hearts these promises have cheered; how many erring and wavering minds these truths have established; how many obstinate sinners these exhortations and threatenings have converted, and it will help to give them their due value in your eyes. Fifthly, mark them with a most diligent

<sup>q</sup> Scriptura est ipsa vox et anima Dei. D. Greg.

attention, as those did our Saviour's words (Luke xix. ult.) Let your eyes be fixed on the minister, as if you *expected to receive something*, (Acts iii. 5.) Let your ear be open to receive the words, and your heart ponder well the sense; and be sure you narrowly watch and speedily drive away those evil thoughts which come to devour your sacrifice and carry your souls away. How deservedly would that poor man want relief, who should entertain himself with every bird within his view, at a time of distribution, till all were disposed of! Yet such is their folly, who, while they are pursuing every idle thought which is suggested by Satan, lose many sentences, which might open their eyes, strengthen their hands, and comfort their hearts. You know not what good he deprives himself of, that lets the least sentence slip unobserved; for the very filings of gold are precious, and there is weight in the least tittle of God's word, (Matt. v. 18.) There are many places which are obscure, and by reason of close connections or speedy transitions are no ways to be understood without the comparing them with what precedes and follows<sup>r</sup>, so that breaking one link may spoil the chain. It is not possible a careless hearer should understand them clearly, or apply them prudently, or make any future benefit of them; but we find, by half sentences and slight observation, men suck in errors and evil principles, and the same word which cures one kills another<sup>s</sup>. It is this negligence and inadvertency that makes the scripture so little understood, so hugely perverted, so speedily forgotten, and so slowly practised. We have enough while God's word is reading to employ our

<sup>r</sup> Qui non advertit quid supra et infra scriptum sit, is pervertit verba Dei viventis. Munster.

<sup>s</sup> Όσοι μὲν ἐμπείρως ἀκούουσιν

ὠφελοῦνται, ὅσοι δ' ἀπείρως, βλάπτονται. ἔστιν ἄρα τις ἐμπειρία καθάπερ τοῦ λέγειν, οὕτω καὶ τοῦ ἀκούειν. Arrian. in Epict. lib. 2. cap. 24.

minds and take up our time; and did we give as much heed<sup>t</sup> to scripture as we do to trifles, we might easily understand it, and should be engaged to a firmer belief, and a more conscientious practice thereof.

§. VI. The last part of our care is after the lessons be ended; then, sixthly, meditate of them, and lay them up in your heart, that you may faithfully remember what you have learned, and readily bring it forth upon occasion. We do not only hear God's word to stir us into a present devotion, but to fill our treasures, store our armoury, and victual our fort, against we be besieged by temptation or affliction<sup>u</sup>; and it is not our affections when we hear it, so much as our memory of what we hear, that thus makes it serviceable to us. But we must especially treasure that which is most pertinent to our own condition; and as the Jewish masters love to allegorize, we must not be like the wine-press, which keeps the husks and lets out the pure wine; nor like the sponge, which promiscuously sucks in all; nor yet like the hour-glass, which pours out at one side what it received on the other; but in hearing we must be like the fan, which retains nothing but the solid corn. If we have but skill to choose according to our needs, there is in scripture plenty and variety for all estates; and if our arms be fewer, yet if they be ready and fit, they may be more serviceable than more that are not so well ordered. Lastly, begin immediately to put what you hear into practice, and then it is out of Satan's reach<sup>x</sup>. Take warning by the threatenings, to fly from the evil; encouragement from  
93 the promises, to perform the good; submit to the re-

<sup>t</sup> Qui audierit inveniet Deum, Annot.  
qui etiam studuerit intelligere.

<sup>x</sup> Is divinas scripturas recte legit, qui verba vertit in opera.

<sup>u</sup> Heb. ii. 1. Dr. Hammond's D. Bern.

proofs, observe the directions, and pursue the rewards. If this glass have shewed us our deformities, we must immediately amend them, or we shall soon forget them<sup>y</sup>, and so lose the labour and benefit of our hearing. What signifies a counsellor's opinion or physician's advice, if they be not followed? The better the counsel is, the more is our shame, if we look more on the glory of asking it, than the honour and benefit of observing it. These rules carefully made use of, will be soon found of extraordinary advantage, and may suffice in the general; but because of the variety of scripture, and the necessity of a particular application, we shall add some short intimation how to profit by the several parts hereof. For St. Paul hath told us, that all scripture is useful<sup>z</sup> to inform and teach us in faith<sup>a</sup> and truth, to discover and reprove our sins, to direct and urge our amendment, to promote and improve us in the practice of holiness. Which rule if we follow, we may be able to profit by every chapter, and may learn that art of making every part of God's word (like an exact picture) look directly upon ourselves<sup>b</sup>, and comply with our circumstances, although it was spoken to others, and perhaps of different condition.

§. VII. First then, to apply the Old Testament, out of which the first lessons are taken, we may consider that (besides the Psalms, of which before) it consists of these parts, 1. the law, 2. the history, 3. the morality, 4. the prophecies. 1. The ceremonial laws are omitted

<sup>y</sup> James i. 23, 24. Qui sacras literas legit, nec confert ad rem, similis est seminanti crebro, mententi nunquam, parturienti sæpius et partus sepelienti, otioso cantori qui non habet mercedem operis. Masius e Talm. in Jos. i.

<sup>z</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 16.

<sup>a</sup> — Πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἔλεγχον,

πρὸς ἐπανάρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ. Vide Ham. Annot. in loc.

<sup>b</sup> Omnia quidem dicta Domini omnibus posita: sed pleraque in personas directa, non proprietatem admonitionis nobis constituerunt, sed exemplum. Tert. de præscr. hæret.

in our daily service, because they were proper to the Jews, and had no apparent reason<sup>c</sup> of their obligation; yet if we have time, leisure, and judgment, we may in private improve them into most useful meditations, by applying the types to Christ, and those precepts which are literally obscure, to matters of practical holiness. Of the judicial law also little is read in public; but so much of it as is used, is the foundation of the ancientest and best laws which were made by heathens or Christians, and contains rules of the exactest justice in the world; and if we abate for the difference of our circumstances, may conduct our consciences in many cases of intercourse with our neighbours. Of the moral law no part is passed by, because there are the rules of eternal goodness, to which the consciences of all men give consent at the first hearing, and so are of universal obligation; but they bind us in a higher manner than any (Matth. v. 14.); wherefore we may learn hereby our duty to God and man, and discover all our odious sins; and we may encourage ourselves to obedience from the promises, for they shall certainly be performed either literally in a temporal, or with advantage in a spiritual manner; understanding soul for body, grace for prosperity, and heaven for Canaan. In which manner also we must apply the threatenings to make us penitent for former, and cautious of future offences against so holy a law of so great a God. 2. The history is all read, and is a rare account of the methods of God's providence in the government of the world, from the creation to the return of the captivity. And we are to love and reverence it before all other records, for its Divine Author, and undoubted credit; for the

<sup>c</sup> Heb. : מִתּוֹכָם Verba sunt quæ — Præcepta quorum non patent non habent apertam rationem: facta est ratio. R. Dav. Kim. in — sunt ex decreto Regis. R. Sal. Psal. cxix.

persons it treats of, the chosen people of God; and especially for the excellent design, which is to teach us to fear God, love holiness, and avoid iniquity, by a clearer and more easy method<sup>d</sup> than the precepts can do; because these lively pictures of the final success of piety, and the ruin of wickedness, are more readily apprehended, more deeply impressed, and more firmly remembered, than either advice or naked exhortations. And therefore the examples<sup>e</sup> of prosperous virtue will condemn our folly and sloth, and raise in us a holy emulation to be like those excellent persons, and a lively hope that we shall have the same success and rewards. As also the base designs, constant disappointments, and dreadful events which attend all ungodly wretches, must affright us from treading those<sup>g</sup> paths. And thus the shipwrecks of evil men, and the steps of the saints, may conduct us safely to our journey's end. Only, because the best men may have erred, we must not always do what they did, but make God's precepts<sup>f</sup> the interpreters of their practice, and where they agree we are safe in our imitation. 3. The morality, in the books of Job and Solomon (and some parts of apocryphal authors, which the primitive church also read for instruction of manners), these do recommend unto us all sorts of virtues, and set out the means to obtain them, and the advantages of practising them, and give a true representation of the folly and danger of sin, with cautions against the occasions thereof, laying down innumerable observations, for the ordering

<sup>d</sup> Longum iter per præceptum, breve et efficax per exemplum. Seneca.

<sup>e</sup> Hoc tibi virtutum stimulos, hoc semina laudum, Hoc exempla dabit.—Ne simus ingentium exemplorum parvi imita-

tores. S. Salvian.

<sup>f</sup> Hæc quando in S. Scripturis legimus, non ideo quia facta credimus, facienda credamus, ne violemus præcepta, dum passim sectamur exempla. August. in Mend. cap. 9.

our lives in all conditions and relations; but these are so brief and independent, that we must give extraordinary attention that we may learn our duty, in that place and those circumstances in which we are. Here are rules for princes and people, masters and servants, parents and children, husbands and wives, young and old, rich and poor, prosperous or afflicted persons; and that we every one may learn our own lessons, we must mark those sentences which encourage to some virtue we are deficient in, or reprove some offence we are guilty of; and not out of idleness or malice pick out only those which we suppose fit our neighbours, and paint out their crimes; for thus our own faults pass uncensured, and neither we nor they have benefit by this excellent part of holy writ. 4. The prophecies are the predictions of ruin from the mouth of God to all wicked men, both heathens and enemies of God's people, and also those that then gloried in that name (as we do now), but yet continued in the practice of all iniquity. How sadly do the prophets complain of such! What terrible menaces and piercing reproofs do they give them! Yet every where intermixed with earnest invitations to amendment, and pressing exhortations to sincere reformation, and the practice of that hearty obedience which the letter of the law expressed not, but is here required as an introduction to the gospel and coming of Jesus, which is by the prophets set out in all its glory. And when we behold that both those heathen nations and the Jews also have pulled utter ruin on themselves by their contempt of the promises, and verified the threatenings by their disobedience to these warnings; we ought to fear and grow wise by their calamity, to take heed to answer our profession with a holy life, and to cast off all those destructive sins, or we may be sure these prophecies shall once

more be fulfilled in our inevitable destruction. As for the more mysterious prophecies<sup>g</sup>, we need not curiously pry into them, nor know particularly to what church or persons to fix the woes therein denounced; but rather, applying them to our own lusts, let us take courage from the assurance of victory under Christ's kingdom, to mortify and subdue them. That as God hath sent him to us in the flesh, and so far made good these predictions, so we may admit him to reign in our hearts; and then we shall experience the truth of that triumph, joy and peace, which is promised to wait upon his government, and also avoid all the terrors that are denounced against the workers of iniquity.

§. VIII. The New Testament is read for the second lessons, because it is the perfection of the Law, the substance of the types, and the fulfilling of all the prophecies; and because it hath manifested the reward more fully, it heightens and improves the duties<sup>h</sup>; for since to us *much is given, much may justly be required*. Now that so clear a discovery of God's infinite love may the more powerfully work upon us, let us well consider, 1. the history of the Gospel; 2. the Epistles.

1. To apply and improve the gospel, let us consider it as an exact account of all that Jesus did and suffered for us. Here is a relation of his mean and humble birth, a record of his holy and afflicted life, a register of his miracles, a summary of his sermons, and a most moving description of his painful and meritorious death. Let us therefore, in hearing these lessons, imagine ourselves of his retinue, as if we were giving audience to

<sup>g</sup> S. Propheta audivit et non intellexit; quid facient hi qui signatum librum et usque ad tempus consummationis multis obscuritatibus involutum præ-

sumptione mentis edisserunt? Hieron. in Dan.

<sup>h</sup> Lex vetus ligat manum, lex nova ligat animum.



his voice, and beholding his wonders of goodness and might. Let us carry our pride to his nativity, our idleness to his industrious doing good to all, our anger to 95 his meekness, our revenge to his gentleness and love of his enemies, that they may blush and die, when they see their deformity by so sweet a pattern. See and wonder, admire, love, and strive to imitate your dear Saviour in kindness and charity, mercy and pity, diligence and piety, patience and constancy, faith and zeal; and rejoice to have him presented to you thus, because your Captain is your companion<sup>i</sup>, and hath done himself what he requires of you. The servant of Wenceslaus, following his royal and devout master barefoot in a deep snow to a house of prayer in a winter night, when he began to tire, beheld his prince, and with shame and love recruited his tired spirits, and every look gave him a new life: so would the sight of Jesus beget in us, did we view him with that affection and steadiness as we ought; if we have a due love for Christ, it will not only be pleasant, but profitable, thus daily to hear of him. For his sermons will convert us, his conversation engage us to love him more, his example will invite and inflame us, and his death will above all tie our souls to him, and make our sins as odious as the worst instruments of that black cruelty: thus we may live like him, die with him, and rise again to newness of life.

2. Those sacred epistles are used, which do further explain the mysteries of the Divine love, and the covenant of grace, declaring God's designs in it, his expectations from us, and the preparations made for us; with incomparable cautions against the deceits of Satan, the cruelty of persecutors, and falsehoods of heretics, toge-

<sup>i</sup> Tunc enim promptius ibunt milites, cum dux fit socius.

ther with variety of promises, exhortations, and directions so closely united, and so majestically expressed, that it requires a quick apprehension and a solid judgment to unravel all the mysteries in them; and yet they that avoid curiosity and self-conceit, and bring humility, love, and holy resolutions, cannot be more effectually improved in knowledge and piety by any part of scripture. And this rule must always be observed, when we hear any part of God's word, that we do not pursue difficulties and disputes, but apply the holy scripture to profit by it. And certainly he best understands it, who learns from it to bridle his passions, bound his desires, conquer his appetites; to fear God, love his neighbour, and to be careful of his own immortal soul: and if we make this use of the words of God, we shall have good cause to join in the next duty of giving praise to him that made them; and assists us that we may profit by them.

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## SECTION X.

96

OF THE HYMNS FOR THE MORNING PRAYER, AND FIRST OF  
THE TE DEUM.

§. I. THERE is not in the whole circle of Christian duties any more universal than praise: for because in every thing God shews mercy, we must *in every thing give thanks*<sup>a</sup>. So that hymns of praise are ever seasonable, especially in the house of God, where they are to be intermixed with every part of Divine service, to make it pleasant to us, and acceptable to him we worship. We are to bless God for our bodily food; how much more then for the food of our souls? The pro-

<sup>a</sup> 1 Thess. v. 18.

viding of which for us is the greatest mercy next to that of giving the eternal word to us. For if God had not written his word for us, we should not have seen either our sin or our danger, our duty nor our assistance, our Deliverer nor our reward; and shall we not praise him for this shining light? And particularly, what chapter is there, but it contains a peculiar reason of our thankfulness? whether it instruct or reprove us; invite us to duty, or affright us from sin; whether it consist of promises or threatenings, precepts or examples, it ought to be concluded with—*We praise thee, O God*; viz. for illuminating our minds, quickening our affections, renewing our memory, reviving our hopes, awakening our sloth, or confirming our resolutions. Some benefit we have, or may have, by every one; and therefore a hymn will both refresh us with variety, discharge a great obligation to God, and prepare us to hear the next lesson with fresher appetite. We have two for our choice, that we may suit every chapter; but we shall first consider that which is most usual, the *Te Deum*.

*The Analysis of the Te Deum.*

97

§. II. The *Te Deum* consisteth of three parts :

- |                                  |   |                            |  |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| 1. An act of praise, containing, | 1. The exercise of the duty itself, . . . | 1. All that are on earth,  | 1. <i>We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge &amp;c.</i>                |
|                                  | 2. The company joining with us in it,     | 2. All that are in heaven, | 2. <i>All the earth doth worship thee &amp;c.</i>                      |
|                                  |   | 1. The glorious angels,    | 3. <i>To thee all angels cry &amp;c.</i>                               |
|                                  |   | 2. The glorified saints,   | 4. <i>To thee cherubin &amp;c.</i>                                     |
|                                  |   |                            | 5. <i>Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.</i>                       |
|                                  |   |                            | 6. <i>Heaven and earth are full &amp;c.</i>                            |
|                                  |   |                            | 7. <i>The glorious company of the apostles &amp;c.</i>                 |
|                                  |   |                            | 8. <i>The goodly fellowship of the prophets &amp;c.</i>                |
|                                  |   |                            | 9. <i>The noble army of martyrs &amp;c.</i>                            |
|                                  |   |                            | 10. <i>The holy Church throughout all the world &amp;c.</i>            |
|                                  |   |                            | 11. <i>The Father of an infinite majesty.</i>                          |
|                                  |   |                            | 12. <i>Thine honourable, true &amp;c.</i>                              |
|                                  |   |                            | 13. <i>Also the Holy Ghost &amp;c.</i>                                 |
|                                  |   |                            | 14. <i>Thou art the king of glory, O Christ.</i>                       |
|                                  |   |                            | 15. <i>Thou art the everlasting Son of &amp;c.</i>                     |
|                                  |   |                            | 16. <i>When thou tookest upon thee to deliver &amp;c.</i>              |
|                                  |   |                            | 17. <i>When thou hadst overcome the sharpness &amp;c.</i>              |
|                                  |   |                            | 18. <i>Thou sittest at the right hand of God &amp;c.</i>               |
|                                  |   |                            | 19. <i>We believe that thou shalt come to be &amp;c.</i>               |
|                                  |   |                            | 20. <i>We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, &amp;c.</i>          |
|                                  |   |                            | 21. <i>Make them to be numbered with thy saints &amp;c.</i>            |
|                                  |   |                            | 22. <i>O Lord, save thy people, and bless &amp;c.</i>                  |
|                                  |   |                            | 23. <i>Govern them, and lift them up for ever.</i>                     |
|                                  |   |                            | 24. <i>Day by day we magnify thee.</i>                                 |
|                                  |   |                            | 25. <i>And we worship thy name ever, world &amp;c.</i>                 |
|                                  |   |                            | 26. <i>Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day &amp;c.</i>              |
|                                  |   |                            | 27. <i>O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy &amp;c.</i>              |
|                                  |   |                            | 28. <i>O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, &amp;c.</i>              |
|                                  |   |                            | 29. <i>O Lord, in thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded.</i> |
- 
- |                                 |                                       |                                      |  |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2. An act of faith, expressing, | 1. The persons confessing this faith, | 1. Every person of the Trinity,      | 1. The Father,   |
|                                 | 2. The articles thereof, concerning,  | 2. The Son in particular, declaring, | 2. The Son,  |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 3. The Holy Ghost,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 1. The glory of his kingdom,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 2. The eternity of his Divine nature,  |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 3. The humility of his birth,  |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 4. The merit of his death,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 5. The height of his exaltation,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 6. The certainty of his return,  |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 1. Internal assistance,  |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 2. Eternal salvation,  |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 3. External,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 1. Safety and success,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 2. Protection and defence,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 1. Who we are, viz. his constant servants,                                       |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 2. What we desire,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 1. Freedom from sin at present,  |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 2. Continual mercy afterwards,   |
|                                 |                                       |                                      | 3. On what grounds we hope to obtain our desires, viz. our trust in God's mercy, |
- 
- |                            |                                  |                         |  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 3. An act of supplication, | 1. For all God's people desiring | 1. Internal assistance, | 20. <i>We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, &amp;c.</i>          |
|                            | 2. For ourselves, shewing,       | 2. Eternal salvation,   | 21. <i>Make them to be numbered with thy saints &amp;c.</i>            |
|                            |                                  | 3. External,            | 22. <i>O Lord, save thy people, and bless &amp;c.</i>                  |
|                            |                                  |                         | 23. <i>Govern them, and lift them up for ever.</i>                     |
|                            |                                  |                         | 24. <i>Day by day we magnify thee.</i>                                 |
|                            |                                  |                         | 25. <i>And we worship thy name ever, world &amp;c.</i>                 |
|                            |                                  |                         | 26. <i>Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day &amp;c.</i>              |
|                            |                                  |                         | 27. <i>O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy &amp;c.</i>              |
|                            |                                  |                         | 28. <i>O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, &amp;c.</i>              |
|                            |                                  |                         | 29. <i>O Lord, in thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded.</i> |

*A Practical Discourse on the Te Deum.*

§. III. WE PRAISE THEE, O GOD, WE ACKNOWLEDGE THEE TO BE THE LORD: ALL THE EARTH &c. unto versicle 9, THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS PRAISE THEE] Although this song of praise be not of Divine authority, yet it is said to have been miraculously composed, and first sung by St. Ambrose and St. Augustine after the baptism of that illustrious convert; and it is placed among the undoubted works of holy Ambrose, who in the times of general calamity first brought the use of hymns into the Latin churches, (which had been used in the east from the beginning,) and made several forms of praise himself; and among the rest this grand and powerful hymn<sup>b</sup>, which, it is likely, he means, when he speaks of that confession of the Trinity in verse, which the people so much delighted in, and sung so joyfully every day. For this hath ever since been frequently used and highly esteemed in the church; not only for its author's sake, but for its own, since it is so rare a piece of choice devotion. The principal scope hereof is to give all glory to God, which therefore is interwoven with every part; but these nine first versicles are wholly eucharistical, wherein we express our own gratitude, and to heighten our devotion, we cast our eyes on all creatures in heaven and earth, that join with us in paying the same duty. We have now heard out of God's sacred word those gracious invitations and sweet comforts, those useful directions and necessary warnings which he therein gives us, for all which we give him thanks when we say, *We praise thee, O God.* We have also heard many instances of his power and

<sup>b</sup> Grande carmen istud est, et quo nihil potentius: quid enim potentius, quam confessio Trinitatis, quæ quotidie totius populi ore celebratur? Certatim omnes

student fidem fateri; Patrem, Filium et Spiritum Sanctum norunt versibus prædicare. — Ambros. in Conc. de Basilicis, &c. tom. 5.

been instructed in his holy commands, which engages us to acknowledge his authority and pay our homage. Therefore we promise to be his servants, and seriously *acknowledge him to be the Lord*, which is a mocking of the Divine Majesty, Luke vi. 46, unless we resolve to *do what he says*, and commands us in his holy word. But why should we not be sincere in this acknowledgment, since it is our honour to serve him whom the heavens praise, and the earth worships, and to whom all the inhabitants of both are subject? The earth, that is, the men that dwell therein, in all ages did, and in every nation some now do, give him honour. For there is no time nor country, which hath not afforded many to confess and adore him that fills all places, and endureth *from everlasting to everlasting*. But if so many examples out of all mankind will not suffice to make us praise him devoutly and acknowledge him faithfully, let us lift up our eyes to the heavens, which are replenished with creatures more noble and glorious than we; yet all these make it their employment, and account it their delight to glorify his name. We lately prayed that God's *will might be done on earth as it is in heaven*: and how it is done there, this excellent hymn will shew you. It opens heaven to you; nay, with the evangelical prophet, carries you thither to behold the holy orders above, angels and powers, cherubims and seraphims, apostles, prophets, and martyrs. This shews you their employment, which is all one and the same that you are now exercised in, even to *praise the Lord continually* every morning<sup>c</sup>, or rather every moment, with never-ceasing voices<sup>d</sup>. Nay, here is their song<sup>e</sup>,

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xxxii. 26. Dimitte me, quia ascendit columna auroræ, et appropinquat hora angelorum, ad laudandum Deum. Targ. Hierosol.

<sup>d</sup> Voce incessabili. Ambr.

<sup>e</sup> Isai. vi. 3. Sanctus Pater, Sanctus Filius, Sanctus Spiritus. Chal. Par. Jon. Ita olim legabat P. Galatinus.

even that mysterious anthem to the Trinity, by which they confess every person and adore all as holy. So that you may at once learn what to believe, and how to worship God. O let us learn this song we must sing in heaven, when we shall bear a part in that celestial choir, where all these glorious hosts ever magnify their great Commander, all creatures of the earth, all the lights of heaven, and the innumerable and invincible legions of angels, are listed under this our Lord, fight for him, and ever execute his commands. Wherefore he is called *Lord God of Hosts*, or of *Sabaoth*, that is, of the armies and powers of heaven and earth. And since every one that is under him gives him honour, the *majesty of his glory* must needs reach as far as his troops extend, and they fill both the upper and lower world. Let us join with the angelic hosts now, and we shall be joined to them hereafter; let us not be discouraged at the distance of our nature and condition; for many of our brethren (which were once as we are) are already glorious, they are admitted to this honour, and intermixed with this society. O see the painful and faithful apostles, see the zealous and holy prophets, behold the triumphant army of devout and courageous martyrs, how they all rejoice and sing. The apostles are ravished with his glory, whom they saw in his weakness. The prophets are delighted with him whom they prophesied of, but never beheld before. The martyrs are transported with his love, and forgetting all their torments, solace themselves in his joys; and every gaping wound<sup>f</sup> is now a mouth to chant out his praise. O what honour is it to serve such a Lord! what delight to be admitted to so glorious a society! Summon up all the powers and faculties of your souls, and as

<sup>f</sup> Quot vulnera hiantia, tot ora laudantia Deum.

they fill heaven, do you fill the earth, with setting out the *majesty of his glory*.

§. IV. THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE, &c. unto versicle 19. WE BELIEVE THAT THOU SHALT COME TO BE OUR JUDGE] The second part of this hymn (in the eleven following versicles) is a confession of faith. Every article whereof is a further motive to praise God, either for the glory of his essence, or the mercy that appears in his works. And since we see God at present only by faith, the profession of that faith may be reputed to us as a glorifying of him, Rom. xv. 6. The saints and angels see him face to face, and what they do by intuition, we do by faith, by hope, and by desires of a nearer union. And certainly we cannot set out the *majesty of his glory* better, than by assenting to that revelation which his truth hath made of himself; and by confessing him that the glorious hosts of heaven adore, and the universal church doth and ever did acknowledge. For so we agree in a sweet harmony with the saints and angels in heaven, and with all holy men our brethren on earth. The unanimous consent of the servants, is a manifestation of the Master's honour; and it is an evidence that the Lord is really such, and so glorious as we believe him to be, since all unite in the profession of it. And this holds, as in all articles, so most evidently in the great mystery of the Trinity, which the celestial choir own by their *trisagium*; *Holy, holy, holy*. And the catholic church hath most unanimously acknowledged, most sacredly kept, and most courageously defended it, above all other articles; so that all Christians agree in this, who yet differ in many other points. Let us then cheerfully acknowledge the infinite majesty of the Father, who governs all creatures; and declare the honour of his true and only Son,



whose glory is great in our salvation; let us confess the divinity of that Holy Spirit, who is our Advocate in heaven, and our Comforter<sup>s</sup> upon the earth. Above all, let us be careful that the humiliation of our merciful Redeemer do not lessen our esteem of him. To prevent which, the church in this hymn, as also in all her creeds, makes the largest and most particular confession of the Son of God: we have here a full account of his divinity and humanity, because by the malice of Satan these have been confounded and mistaken by so many heresies; and we have also a recital of those works of his which most concern us, because it is the interest of us all to know and believe these, which more directly tend to our salvation than any other of the works of God, and therefore do more strongly engage our gratitude; for we shall find abundant matter of praise both in what Jesus is in his nature, and what he hath done for us. He is very God, and therefore we give him that title, *King of Glory*, which alone belongs to the Lord of hosts. St. Ambrose (the best interpreter of this hymn) saith<sup>b</sup>, that the twenty-fourth Psalm was sung by the angels at our Saviour's resurrection; those who came with him calling to those in heaven to open the gates for the *King of glory*, who answered them as it is in that Psalm. We may call him the *King of glory*, as he is very God, and because he hath purchased glory for us, and shall distribute it to us, and receive glory and praise from us, and all that are partakers of it; yet his glory depends not on our praises, but is inseparable from his nature; because he is the everlasting and only begotten *Son of God*; not

<sup>ε</sup> Παράκλητος. Utrumque signif. Joh. xiv. 16. et 1 Ep. Joh. ii. 1.

<sup>h</sup> Psal. xxiv. 7 et 10. Quis est iste rex gloriæ? Respondetur

a scientibus, Dominus virtutum, ipse est rex gloriæ. Ergo Dominus virtutum est ipse filius. Ambr. de fide, lib. 4.

created as the angels, nor adopted as men, but by eternal generation coeternal with the Father and co-equal. What though he was born in time, and became the Son of man? This doth not take away his being the Son of God nor change his nature, but express his 100 love and engage our affections. Dear Jesus! whither hath thy love carried thee? From glory to misery, from the highest throne in heaven to the lower parts of the earth<sup>i</sup>. How hast thou pursued us through all the stages of our infelicity! From the dishonours of the womb to those of the tomb, not abhorring the meanest place that was pure, nor the lowest condition that innocence could be put into. What cause have we to bless thee, who wert pleased to become what we were, that we might be (not what we deserved, but) as thou<sup>k</sup> art! Holy Saviour, we believe and rejoice in believing, that thou wast born like us, livedst with us, and diedst for us, and thy death was our life. It was shameful and inglorious, sharp and tormenting; so terrible as might startle a great confidence in a good cause: but it was not more bitter to thee than sweet to us. We, even we, O Lord, had armed death with a sting sharp and venomous, for our sin had provoked the Divine wrath. And this sting (though with the suffering of inexpressible dolours) thou hast pulled out<sup>l</sup>, and having satisfied the justice of God, canst now triumph over death itself, and enable us with comfort to say, *O death, where is that sting*, with which thou didst threaten all the world with unavoidable destruction? Who can behold what thou hast suffered and we have escaped, and not be ravished with thy love, O blessed Lord Jesus!

<sup>i</sup> Ephes. iv. 9. Pudorem exordii nostri non recusavit, sed contumelias naturæ nostræ transcurrit. Hilar.

<sup>k</sup> Ideo quod homo est et

Christus esse voluit, ut homo possit esse quod Christus est.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 56. Gr. *Kéivρον*. Devicto mortis aculeo. Ambr.

The way to heaven was ever open to innocence, but we all had sinned and come short of the glory of God. Heaven's gates were shut against us, and hell's mouth open to receive us. And in this estate our life had been worse than death, by the dreadful expectations of deserved vengeance, and our death had certainly delivered us up to feel what we feared. Do we live with any comfort? it is thou hast removed our fears. Can we die with any peace? it is thou alone hast renewed our hopes. If heaven be now open to receive any men that are, or ever were, or shall be; it is not by the merits of their own innocence, but by those of this thy all-saving death. We need not dispute *de facto*, whether any of the saints before Christ had actual possession of heaven's glory; (the scripture is not clear, Heb. xi. 40, 1 Pet. iii. 19, Matt. xxvii. 52, as some think, and the Fathers<sup>m</sup>, especially St. Ambrose, seem to deny it, nor is it easy to disprove them;) but this we are sure of *de jure*, that none under the Law nor the Gospel ever were received into heaven, but by faith in this death of Jesus; God might admit men by the merit of it, even before it was accomplished; but no holiness that we are capable of can challenge heaven, nor no feigned purgatory expiations can satisfy for our sins. Wherefore whenever Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob entered into their glory, it was in the right of Jesus, who by his saving death pulled out that fatal sting, and obtained admission for all believers, not only for Jews and saints of former ages, but for Gentiles, and all the world that shall so own him as a Saviour, as to give up themselves to be ruled by his holy laws. Our blessed Master indeed was glorious with his Father from all eternity; he

<sup>m</sup> Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. Tert. in Dom. Pas. Ambros. Com. de Anima, cap. 55. Cypr. Ser. ment. in Rom. 5. et passim.

was in heaven before<sup>n</sup>, but not in our nature, not as our advocate, not to take possession for us; but now he is restored to his throne again, ready to receive *all believers* into the participation of his joys. And now his glory is our great advantage and infinite comfort; so that we may receive this article with that delight with which old Jacob did the news of his beloved Joseph's advancement over all the land of Egypt; assuring ourselves, that he who stooped so low to us, and suffered so much for us, will employ his regained power and glory for our good, even to take us up to him, and to let us reign with him, who ever lives to make intercession for us. We cannot see him in his glory *at the right hand of God* by the eye of sense, but we do discern him by the eye of faith; and we believe he shall be revealed in all this glory, when he comes to judge the world at the last day. He shall then come to examine and pass sentence upon all, and we must every one bear our own burdens, so that we must not concern ourselves for the fate of others, but busy ourselves to prepare our own accounts, for we are sure *he shall be our Judge*. Our guilt might make us fear and tremble to think of it; yet his mercy may comfort us, and quicken us to make ready. Who could we rather wish should judge us, than he that redeemed us; and he that now offers to give us a pardon sealed in his own blood? Let us now accept his tender, and we need not 101 tremble then, for so our Judge shall be our Advocate and our Friend.

§. 5. WE THEREFORE PRAY THEE, HELP THY SERVANTS WHOM THOU HAST REDEEMED WITH THY PRECIOUS BLOOD, &c. unto the last versicle, O LORD, IN THEE HAVE I TRUSTED, LET ME NEVER BE CONFOUNDED] The last part,

<sup>n</sup> Ascendit non ubi Verbum Verbum caro factum antea non Deus ante non fuerat: sed ubi sederat. Ruffin. in Symbol.

which closeth this devout and exquisite form, turns both the thanksgiving and confession into prayer, as a most natural consequence of all the preceding considerations; for who can behold so great a God, so universally praised in heaven and earth, and not believe him to be the Fountain of all goodness, and desire his favour? Who can contemplate the Saviour of the world in his essential glory, in his admirable condescension, willing humiliation, and illustrious restauration, and not break forth into most passionate supplications for a share in his love? Or if we go back no farther than the two last verses, we there saw him with St. Stephen, sitting in all his *glory at the right hand of God*, and shall we not request him to be mindful of us in his glory, whom in his low estate he purchased with his life and blood? and as he put on weakness and submitted to misery to redeem us, that he will employ his regained power and glory for our help and assistance? We say, he is to be the judge of us and all the world, John v. 22, 27, and we know we *cannot answer him for one of a thousand*, Job ix. 3. Sure then our wisest way is to *make supplication to our Judge*, Job ix. 15, and to beg that his favour may at that day be shewed to us and all his people; for at his sentence all the world must stand or fall; those whom he justifies, or reputes innocent, shall be set on the right hand, and be reckoned among the number<sup>o</sup> of the saints and sealed ones, Rev. vii. 4; and therefore let us pray to this great Shepherd, that though now the sheep and goats are mixed, yet he will wash us with his blood, and pronounce us guiltless, that our lot may be with his saints. Now that we may be thus disposed of at the last day, we shall need not only his

<sup>o</sup> Numerare pro reputari, Isai. λογίσθη ἐν νουίς Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐν ἁγίοις  
liii. 12. Wisd. v. 5. Πῶς κατα- ὁ κληρὸς αὐτοῦ. Græc.

mercy then, but his grace now, to secure us in our passage through this world. Wherefore we pray with holy David in the last words of the twenty-eighth Psalm, that God would use all means to bring his people to his glory<sup>p</sup>; even that he would save them from all evil, and bless them with all good things. That he would govern and direct them in their duty, and *lift them up* and support them against all opposition for ever. And these are the sum of every Christian's needs and desires. What more can we wish or pray for, than to be rescued out of trouble, and furnished with all blessings needful for our souls and bodies? That God should feed us as a Shepherd (as the Hebrew reads<sup>q</sup>), or govern us as a Prince, conducting our duty by his care and laws, that we may not stray nor go amiss. And lastly, that he should bear us up against all the opposition of Satan and his instruments, and advance us from our low estate, Job xxii. 19, Psalm ix. 14, *to set us up* on that rock where our enemies' malice cannot reach us; but we may stand safely there, till we are lifted up from thence to glory, which we cannot miss of, if God will please to hear these petitions. Therefore having prayed for all that is needful for us as members of the church, we now look more peculiarly to ourselves considered apart. And since we are now and every day employed thus in praising God, we desire him to accept this as a testimony that we are his servants. We declare it in David's phrase, Psalm cxlv. 2<sup>r</sup>, only altering the tense and person. Lord help us, for we are thy servants paying thee the

<sup>p</sup> Psal. xxviii. ult. Serva populum tuum et benedic hæreditati tuæ, et rege eos, et extolle eos usque in æternum. Vulg. Lat.

<sup>q</sup> Heb. et LXX. Pasce eos,

h. e. rege. Vulg. Sorores enim sunt artes pascendi et regnandi. Basil. Conc. 24.

<sup>r</sup> Psal. cxlv. 2. Per singulos dies benedicam tibi, et laudabo nomen tuum, &c. Vulg. Lat.

daily tribute of praise. Whatever thou bestowest on us will not be forgotten, nor buried in ungrateful silence. We meet in thy house every day to *magnify thee* in this manner, and to set out the glory of thy name in every thing thou dost for us. Withhold not thy mercy, for we will not withhold thy praise; and since we resolve *day by day*, that is, daily<sup>s</sup>, to do the work of angels, Lord, keep us pure, as they are, for praise is not seemly nor acceptable in the mouth of a sinner. Let not us who are thy servants in the morning be the devil's slaves<sup>t</sup> before night; but preserve us holy all this day, that our afternoon sins may not rob us of the benefit of this day's praises, nor indispose against the next morning, when our duty will return. Dear Jesus, look on our frailty and strengthen us, look on our guilt and pardon us. We cry earnestly, and double our request; *Jesus, Master, (Matt. xx. 30, 31.) have*  
 102 *mercy on us, have mercy on us*; for our needs are great and pressing. Unless we find mercy for former sins, we must be condemned by thee; and except we obtain mercy for future assistance, we shall be overcome by Satan. O shut not out our prayer; consider not our merits, but our distress; we know we deserve nothing, but we have great hopes (such is thy transcendent goodness) that we shall have what we desire. Those that were better than we, have put words into our mouths, who in the Psalms<sup>u</sup> did not urge thee as if they had been worthy, but only *trusted in thy mercy*, and so do we. We rely not on ourselves or any creature, but on thee alone; for we

<sup>s</sup> Hebr. reduplicatio distributionem significans, ut mane, mane, pro unoquoque mane, Isai. xxviii. 19. et cap. l. 4.

<sup>t</sup> Cœpisti melius quam desinis, ultima primis Distant —

<sup>u</sup> Psal. xxxiii. 22. Sit miseri-

cordia tua, Domine, super nos quemadmodum speravimus in te. Psal. xxxi. 1. In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum. V. Lat. Non quia virtutem habeo,—sed quia speravi in te. Aug. de verb. Ap. 7.

know that thou canst help us, and we have a persuasion thou wilt. All the world sees, by our daily attendance on thee, that all our expectations are from thee. O do not disappoint those hopes that are grounded on thy tender mercy, lest Satan upbraid us, and the world slight us, and then we shall be confounded, and not know which way to look, *Ezra viii. 22, Psalm xxii. 7, 8*; be it therefore unto us according to our faith. Amen, Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Te Deum.*

§. VI. 1. WE PRAISE THEE most heartily for all we have learned out of thy holy word, O God, and it shall be our care to observe thy will, since WE ACKNOWLEDGE THEE TO BE THE LORD, to whom we owe all duty and obedience. We esteem it our happiness and honour to be accounted thy servants, who art Lord of all the world.

2. So that ALL THE EARTH, with its inhabitants, joins with us, and DOTH WORSHIP THEE, who art from eternity, and in all ages hast been acknowledged to be THE FATHER EVER-LASTING.

3. Nor doth this lower world alone own thy supremacy, but praise is given TO THEE by the several orders of ALL ANGELS, who with harmonious voices CRY ALOUD in proclaiming thy glory, which is ever set forth by all the hosts of THE HEAVENS, the thrones, dominions, principalities, AND ALL THE POWERS that are THEREIN.

4. To THEE, O God, triumphant hymns are sung in that celestial choir; for the CHERUBIN on one side, AND the SERAPHIN on the other, with ravishing melody chaunt thy praise, and in their mysterious adorations they CONTINUALLY DO CRY:

5. Saying one to another, HOLY Father, HOLY Son, HOLY Spirit, three Persons, but one LORD, thou art the most mighty GOD OF SABAOOTH, the supreme commander of all the hosts of heaven, consisting of innumerable myriads of blessed spirits.

6. Thou makest us happy with beholding, and the sons of men with expecting thy glory: so that all the inhabitants of HEAVEN AND EARTH rejoice in thee, because all parts of the



universe ARE FULL OF those manifestations of thy power and goodness, which declare THE MAJESTY OF THY GLORY.

7. Thus the angels sing, and (for our great comfort) many of our brethren now glorified bear a part with them. THE GLORIOUS COMPANY OF THE APOSTLES who preached Christ, and with unwearied diligence and patience, admirable courage and fidelity, shewed he was come to save the world; these are now in those regions of bliss, and there for ever PRAISE THEE.

8. As also all those harbingers of thy Son's coming, inspired at sundry times and in divers manners; these are now met in glory, and make up THE GOODLY FELLOWSHIP OF THE PROPHETS, whose words we read on earth, but they now are happy in beholding him of whom they foretold, and also continually PRAISE THEE.

9. To all which blessed numbers are added those undaunted legions, who sealed the truth of the prophets' predictions, and the apostles' preaching, with their blood, even THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS, who conquered infidelity and cruelty by faith and patience; these now are passed from torments to their reward, and they with all other saints and angels, with united hearts and voices, sweetly PRAISE THEE. O Lord, we long to be there, that we might see thee as clearly, and praise thee as heartily as they do.

103 §. VII. 10. But since we can now know thee only by faith, we must glorify thee by agreeing with THE HOLY CHURCH even our faithful brethren THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD, in the confession of that true faith, whereby every good Christian DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE to be what thou hast revealed thyself to be in thy holy word.

11. We believe in that Trinity which the angels worship, even in thee THE FATHER, who by creating and governing all the world, declarest thyself to be OF AN INFINITE MAJESTY.

12. And we believe in him that is equal in glory with thee, and one in nature, THINE HONOURABLE, TRUE, AND ONLY begotten SON, who hath redeemed us, that we of slaves of Satan might be thy adopted sons.

13. We do believe and acknowledge ALSO THE HOLY GHOST to be very God, (equal to and with the Father and the Son,) who is the advocate for us in heaven, and THE COM-

FORER of us upon earth : and these three persons are one God.

14. Thy gracious condescension, O blessed Jesus, shall not eclipse thy Divine perfection, for though thou camest in our likeness to redeem us, yet we believe THOU ART equal with the Father, and THE KING OF GLORY, for thou ever wast most glorious in thyself, and thou, O CHRIST, art anointed of God, a King and Priest for ever.

15. From eternity thou art God, neither hadst thou thy beginning when thou wast made the Son of man ; for THOU ART THE EVERLASTING SON, begotten OF THE FATHER before the world began.

16. Yet (blessed be thy name) thou didst change thy glory for misery, and sufferedst thy eternity to be measured by time ; for WHEN THOU TOOKEST UPON THEE that glorious design TO DELIVER MAN from eternal death, THOU DIDST NOT ABHOR the meanest condition, but wast conceived in THE VIRGIN'S WOMB, and born like unto us, only void of sin.

17. How cheerfully didst thou embrace a bitter and bloody passion, to satisfy the Divine justice provoked by our offences ! And WHEN THOU HADST, by suffering the wrath due to us, OVERCOME THE SHARPNESS of that sting OF DEATH with which our sins had armed it, the whole world found the benefit of thy cross : and by thy merits THOU DIDST OPEN those gates of mercy which iniquity had shut against all mankind, for hereby alone admittance into THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN is granted TO ALL BELIEVERS that are, or were, or ever shall be hereafter.

18. And no such can be excluded, for now THOU SITTEST as a glorious conqueror AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, to intercede that the faithful may have the benefit of thy purchase, to keep possession for them, and finally to receive them to partake with thee IN THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, which thou now enjoyest, and canst dispose it to whom thou pleasest.

19. To our great comfort therefore WE BELIEVE THAT THOU, who hast been our Redeemer and art our Advocate, SHALT COME, with millions of angels in great glory to try all the world, and particularly TO BE OUR JUDGE, with full power to condemn or acquit us.

§. VIII. 20. WE THEREFORE knowing our guilt and re-

membering thy justice, do beforehand beg thy mercy, and most humbly PRAY THEE TO HELP THY SERVANTS with thy infinite merits and abundant grace; and to answer for them WHOM THOU HAST so dearly bought, and REDEEMED WITH THY MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD, that we may not lose the benefit, nor thou the glory of thy gracious purchase.

21. O do thou acquit all thy faithful ones, and by applying thy merits MAKE THEM TO BE NUMBERED WITH THY SAINTS, that being placed on thy right hand, they may have a part with thee and them IN GLORY UNSPEAKABLE and EVERLASTING.

104 22. And that thou mayest have mercy on them in thy kingdom, give them here all that may fit them for it, and bring them to it; O LORD, SAVE THY PEOPLE from all evil which might dishearten or defile them, AND BLESS thy church with all good things, which may make it flourish as THINE HERITAGE, and encourage it in well doing.

23. Be thou a Shepherd to watch over and feed thy servants, a King to defend and GOVERN THEM in all thy holy ways: and when Satan and his instruments design to cast them down, rescue AND LIFT THEM UP by thy grace, above their power and malice, that they may be safe FOR EVER.

24. Particularly, be mindful of us in this congregation, who will never forget thee; but as we daily taste of thy mercies, so DAY BY DAY we acknowledge them in thy house, and WE MAGNIFY THEE for them with these sacred hymns.

25. Thou art an ever-flowing spring of comfort, therefore we ever praise thee, AND WE WORSHIP THY NAME both now in this world, and will glorify it in thy kingdom EVER WORLD WITHOUT END.

26. And as by our daily paying thee this tribute of praise, we declare ourselves thy servants; VOUCHSAFE, O LORD, to remember our frailty, and by thy grace TO KEEP US THIS DAY (which we have begun in thy service) holy, pure, and WITHOUT SIN, that our present sacrifice may be accepted, and our hearts fitly disposed against the next opportunity.

27. We have so often fallen into sin, and so sadly smarted for our folly, that we must now most earnestly beseech thee, O LORD, to forgive, and HAVE MERCY UPON US for all that is

past; and again, to HAVE MERCY UPON US, and deliver us for the remaining part of our lives.

28. We beg compassion of thee in all humility; O LORD, LET THY MERCY come to us, and LIGHTEN UPON US, not for our merits, nor after the proportion of our deserts, but of our faith; even LIKE AS WE, encouraged by thy promises, most readily and firmly DO PUT OUR TRUST IN THEE and hope for it.

29. And though we do not challenge it by desert, yet we believe thou wilt not frustrate any of our expectations; for every one of us renouncing all other helps, can say, O LORD, IN THEE alone HAVE I TRUSTED, because I know thy grace and bounty. Let me not now ask in vain; O LET ME NEVER be put to shame before the world or the Devil, nor BE CONFOUNDED by being sent away empty.

## SECTION XI.

105

OF THE SECOND HYMN AFTER THE FIRST LESSON AT MORNING PRAYER, OR THE BENEDICITE.

§. I. WE shall the more briefly pass this hymn, because it is seldom used, and sufficiently plain: nor need we dispute about the original of it, there being no necessity that our hymns should always be taken out of the canonical scripture; yet Epiphanius quotes this in a matter of faith<sup>a</sup>, and many of the ancients mention it with great respect, particularly Ruffinus<sup>b</sup> and St. Augustine<sup>c</sup>, who, as Sixtus Senensis saith<sup>d</sup>, do affirm it was used to be sung in all assemblies of the faithful from the beginning. And lest the council of Toledo should be thought to have first introduced it into the catholic church, they do plainly declare, that they only enjoined it in their country, as being already<sup>e</sup> used in

<sup>a</sup> In Ancorato, p. 504.

<sup>b</sup> Ruffin. lib. 2. advers. Hieron.

<sup>c</sup> Augustin. Sermon. de Sanctis,

<sup>d</sup> Sixtus Senens. Bibliothecæ,

lib. 8. Hæres. 6. de lib. Dan.

<sup>e</sup> Audistis in benedictionibus,  
et audistis omni solennitate quan-

all other parts of the world<sup>f</sup>: besides, it is no other than a paraphrase upon the cxlviii<sup>th</sup> Psalm, agreeing so exactly with it both in words and sense, that we cannot despise this, but we must reproach that part of holy writ; and surely, if a clear method will recommend it, the following analysis will shew this hymn to be peculiarly excellent upon that account.

106 *The Analysis of the Benedicite, or Song of the Three Children.*

§. II. This hymn is a summons to all creatures to praise God,

I. In particular, to those	I. In general to the whole creation, . . .		1. <i>O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye &amp;c.</i>		
	1. Above,	1. In the highest heavens, . . .	2. <i>O ye angels &amp;c.</i>		
2. In the starry heaven, . . .		3. <i>O ye heavens, &amp;c.</i>			
3. In the aery heaven, { Meteors with times and seasons,		4. <i>O ye waters &amp;c.</i>			
II. In particular, to those	2. Below,	1. Things inanimate, both the	1. Land and its plants,	5. <i>O ye powers &amp;c.</i>	
			2. Water, { 1. Fresh, . . . 2. Salt, . . .	6. <i>O ye sun and moon, &amp;c.</i>	
		3. Living creatures in	1. The sea, . . .	7. <i>O ye stars of heaven, &amp;c.</i>	
			2. The air, . . .	8. <i>O ye showers, &amp;c.</i>	
		3. The earth,	1. Beasts, . . .	9. <i>O ye winds &amp;c.</i>	
			2. Men,	1. In general, . . .	10. <i>O ye fire and heat, &amp;c.</i>
		2. In particular,	1. Israel, . . .	11. <i>O ye winter and summer, &amp;c.</i>	
			2. Priests, . . .	12. <i>O ye dew and &amp;c.</i>	
		3. Levites, . . .	3. Levites, . . .	13. <i>O ye frost and cold, &amp;c.</i>	
			4. All good men, . . .	14. <i>O ye ice and snow, &amp;c.</i>	
		5. These three,	5. These three, . . .	15. <i>O ye nights and days, &amp;c.</i>	
					16. <i>O ye light and darkness, &amp;c.</i>
					17. <i>O ye lightnings, &amp;c.</i>
					18. <i>O let the earth &amp;c.</i>
					19. <i>O ye mountains and hills, &amp;c.</i>
					20. <i>O ye green things &amp;c.</i>
					21. <i>O ye wells, &amp;c.</i>
					22. <i>O ye seas, &amp;c.</i>
					23. <i>O ye whales, &amp;c.</i>
					24. <i>O all ye fowls &amp;c.</i>
			25. <i>O all ye beasts, &amp;c.</i>		
			26. <i>O ye children of men, &amp;c.</i>		
			27. <i>O let Israel &amp;c.</i>		
			28. <i>O ye priests &amp;c.</i>		
			29. <i>O ye servants &amp;c.</i>		
			30. <i>O ye spirits &amp;c.</i>		
			31. <i>O ye holy &amp;c.</i>		
			32. <i>O Ananias, Asarias, and Misael, bless &amp;c.</i>		

do leguntur, quomodo omnia laudant Deum, cœlestia et terrestria, angeli, homines, luminaria cœli, arbores terræ, &c. Augustin. Homil. 35. tom. 10.

<sup>f</sup> Hymnum quoque trium puerorum in quo universæ cœli et

terræ creaturæ Deum collaudant, et quem ecclesia tota catholica per totum orbem diffusa celebrat, publice sanctum concilium decantari instituit. Concil. Toletan. IV. anno 633. canon 14.

*A brief Discourse upon the Benedicite.*

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§. III. O ALL YE WORKS OF THE LORD, BLESS YE THE LORD, PRAISE HIM AND MAGNIFY HIM FOR EVER, &c.] Although David had told us that the heavens declare God's glory, Psalm xix. 1, yet he also elegantly summons them to praise him, Psalm cxlviii. 1, 4. The works of God are so excellent in themselves, that they do without an interpreter (as Philo notes) set forth the wisdom and power of their great Creator<sup>s</sup>. But yet since we have the benefit of them, and as well reason to understand, as speech to express the glory of him who made both them and us, we ought to lend the creatures a tongue wherewith they may glorify God; and while we rhetorically speak to them, we do properly intend to excite our own souls, to admire the wisdom which contrived, to adore the power which produced, and to praise the goodness which preserves the whole creation, for the comfort of mankind. And though every thing we can behold reads us a lecture of the Divine bounty, yet our forgetfulness and ingratitude shews we have often need, by such a hymn, to be minded to praise the Lord for all his benefits; so that this hymn is never unseasonable; yet it seems most proper for the Sabbath day, which is designed for a thankful remembrance of all God's works; and also after the reading the history of the creation, or any part of scripture where God is shewed to use the creatures as instruments of his justice or mercy. As to the composure itself, I know not how it is possible to put the works of God into a more natural and exact method, beginning with the highest heavens, and thence de-

<sup>s</sup> Ita Ambros. Vocem ex se sibi invicem mitterent; neque enim sol et luna interprete in-

digent. De Cain et Abel, lib. 1. cap. 6.

scending to the orbs where are placed the *powers of the Lord*, that is, the stars of greatest influence, and particularly the planets, as Matt. xxiv. 29, as also the sun and moon, which the Hebrews usually reckon by themselves, and lastly, the lesser stars; then follows the changes in the aery heaven made by heat or cold, drought or moisture, by light or darkness; that is, all sorts of meteors, with the seasons of the year, and the divisions of time in which they are produced. After this, it comes down to this lower world, and first begins with inanimate things; then proceeds to those which live, beginning with the most imperfect, those in the sea and air, fish and fowl; and then the more perfect, beasts and men on the earth, especially exciting God's own people, and immediate servants, yea, all that are truly pious, to join with these three in praising, blessing, and magnifying the Lord for ever and ever. Wherefore while we repeat it, let us consider the comfort and benefit we receive by each of these works of God, and give such attention to it, that the order of it may inform our understanding, the exactness quicken our memory, and the universal goodness which it doth describe, may exalt our devotion; so that we may most heartily praise God for and with all creatures in heaven and earth; and if we so recite this hymn, it will need no other recommendation, than our own experience of the good which we receive from it.

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## SECTION XII.

OF THE BENEDICTUS, OR THE FIRST HYMN AFTER THE  
SECOND LESSON.

§. I. WE may justly reckon holy Zacharias the first prophet of the New Testament, and this one of the first

evangelical hymns; wherefore it is prescribed to be read immediately after the gospel lesson. The inditer of it was the Holy Ghost, so that the matter and the original is divine and unexceptionable; but if any understand not the sense of it, or discern not how proper it is for this place, the subsequent division and discourse will sufficiently inform them.

*The Analysis of the Benedictus.*

§. II. In this hymn we praise God for,	I. Our redemption, considering,	1. The nature of it, as it is an act of God's,	1. Infinite mercy, ...	{	Luke i. 68. <i>Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, &amp;c.</i>
			2. Mighty power, ...		69. <i>And hath raised up a mighty salvation &amp;c.</i>
	2. The end of it, viz.	3. Exact truth, being according to,	1. His word,	{	70. <i>As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, &amp;c.</i>
					71. <i>That we should be saved from our enemies, &amp;c.</i>
§. III. In this hymn we praise God for,	II. The promulgation thereof, shewing,	1. The instrument of this publication,	2. The causes thereof being,	{	72. <i>To perform the mercy promised to our &amp;c.</i>
					73. <i>To perform the oath which he swore &amp;c.</i>
					74. <i>That we being delivered out of the hand &amp;c.</i>
					— <i>might serve him without fear,</i>
					75. <i>In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.</i>
					76. <i>And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet &amp;c.</i>
					77. <i>To give knowledge of salvation to &amp;c.</i>
					78. <i>Through the tender mercy of our God, &amp;c.</i>
					79. <i>To give light to them that sit in darkness &amp;c.</i>

*A Practical Discourse upon the Benedictus.*

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§. III. Ver. 68. BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, FOR HE HATH VISITED AND REDEEMED HIS PEOPLE, &c. unto ver. 73, TO PERFORM THE OATH WHICH HE SWARE TO OUR FOREFATHER ABRAHAM, THAT HE WOULD GIVE US] The lesson which hath now been read out of the gospel doth not only require our attention, but command our gratitude, because it brings that good news



which is the cause of *great joy to all people*. The angels sing, and all holy men, to whom it was revealed, entertain the news with hymns of praise. And if we be as sensible of the mercy as they were, and as thankful as we ought to be for the benefit thereof, we shall rejoice as heartily as they did, since it is as much our concern as theirs. And how can we better express our gladness for all that the gospel records of what Jesus hath done for us, than in those sacred forms indited by the Holy Spirit, with which devout persons welcomed our Lord into the world? These will be the most acceptable unto God, and the most beneficial to us, both to help us with fit expressions, and to engage us to sing them with the same heart and affections which were in the first composers; and particularly, with the devotion of holy Zachariah, the author of this hymn; who after nine months' silence recovering his speech, stays not to rejoice in that personal mercy, but being full of the divine Spirit, the inexpressible joy that filled his heart before, now breaks forth in these words, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*, &c. Wherein he (in the phrase of ancient times, Gen. ix. 26, Psalm xli. 13.) declares the wonderful goodness of God. And we ought to join with him, not scrupling the Jewish form of expression, because, if we be true Christians, and have the circumcision of the heart, we are the children of the promise, Rom. ix. 8, the seed of Abraham, and the Israel of God; and this God of our Israel hath in a more excellent manner delivered us from the slavery of Satan, than he did them from the bondage of Egypt. And yet though this spiritual redemption be much greater, there is such a similitude in the method and circumstances, that it appears that was a type of this; and therefore Zachariah alludes to God's delivering the people from Egyptian misery; for as then he first visited

them<sup>a</sup>, and considered their misery<sup>b</sup>, and then he rescued them *with a mighty hand*: so in our case he visited us in all senses; he remembered our calamity, he looked on our misery, considered our distress, and came himself to see us, making such a visit to us as men and angels admire at. He came in our nature, clothed with our infirmities, he stayed with us and dwelt among us: and all this to *redeem us*, not only by doing miracles as Moses, but by suffering death; not only by conquering our enraged enemies, but satisfying an offended God, buying our lives with his dearest heart's blood. And by taking our punishment, when himself was innocent, he freed us both from the sin and the wrath due to it<sup>c</sup>, that we might with freedom and hope serve our reconciled God. Well may we call this a *mighty salvation*, being accomplished with as much power as it was undertaken with love. Behold how many helpless creatures he delivers from cruel burdens, mighty oppressors, and dreadful expectations; nay, from the just vengeance of an angry, terrible, and almighty God, from endless and unsufferable flames, as horrid as unavoidable. This was indeed a *horn of salvation*<sup>d</sup>, that is, a royal, princely succour and rescue; such as became the Son of so victorious a king as David was; nay, such as became the Son of God, when he undertook to restore the kingdom of David, (which now literally Herod and the Romans had usurped, but spiritually sin and guilt had overcome,) yet Jesus will retrieve it and set it up for ever, not to deliver us from tem-

<sup>a</sup> Exod. iii. 16. Gr. ἐπεσκέψατο.

<sup>b</sup> Gen. xxi. 1. visitavit; Chal. Par. recordatus est; ita Syr. (et Luc. vii. 16.) Arab. respexit; ita Vulg. Ruth i. 6.

<sup>c</sup> Suscipiendo pœnam sine

culpa et culpam delevit et pœnam. Aug.

<sup>d</sup> Cornu, robur et imperium vocat. Hieronym. Hab. iii. Vid. Dan. vii. 24. et viii. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 10. Chal. Par. pro cornu habent regnum. Ecclus. xlix. 1.

poral but spiritual enemies, not from tribute but damnation; and shall not we rejoice at his coronation? It is certain, there is not a more illustrious mercy than this which was proclaimed so early to our first father, Gen. iii. 15, and repeated so often by all the prophets, Acts iii. 24, Deut. xxviii. 7, Jer. xxiii. 6, Isai. xxv. 8, men of excellent holiness, approved integrity, and unquestionable truth. These all, as if they had but one  
 110 mouth, unanimously agreed in the publication hereof. This is the mercy that was so fully confirmed by covenants and oaths, Gen. xii. 16, Heb. vi. to Abraham and all the faithful. This was believed and hoped for by the Jews, and expected by the very Gentiles<sup>e</sup>: this is that good news which cheered Adam after his fall, rejoiced Abraham in his peregrination, revived Jacob on his dying bed, -John viii. 56, Gen. xlix. 18, and supported the patriarchs in all their troubles, although they only saw it at a distance, and hoped and waited for the light while they themselves were in the dark. But when Zachary beheld the morning star, and saw the day begin to spring, which had so long been wished and desired, he is ravished with holy joy; like the northern people, after a tedious night, when they see the sun approach. And shall not they who lived by the bare hope of this, and he that was so overjoyed at the first glimpse of it, condemn us, who are daily taught that Christ is come, and hath confirmed God's truth, and answered all their expectations, if we rejoice not at least as much in the performance as they did in the promise? Behold how God hath favoured us, to

<sup>e</sup> Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis ut eo tempore Judæa perfecti rerum potirentur. Sueton. in Vespas. cap. 4. Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum

literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, perfectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Tacit. Hist. lib. 5. Vide Numer. xxiv. 17.

let us behold the accomplishing of the desire of all nations. See how he hath glorified himself, in giving the world such a manifestation of his truth, as will stop the mouths of his enemies, and for ever strengthen the faith of his humble servants. For now he hath made good all his words and promises, his covenant and protestations in the first and greatest blessing of all, 2 Cor. i. 20, and given us that as an earnest to all the rest. The night seemed long, and the people of God themselves began to fear, and the wicked to deride their expectation. But now we will trust in him; even though he defer, we will wait on him; for we find he will not forget his promises, nor falsify his word. O let us rejoice in the God of truth, who hath sent this *mighty salvation* to us, which is the instrument of our safety, and the evidence of his truth, and on both accounts the cause of our rejoicing.

§. IV. THAT WE BEING DELIVERED OUT OF THE HAND OF OUR ENEMIES MIGHT SERVE HIM WITHOUT FEAR: IN HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE HIM ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE] But in the midst of our joy we must not forget our duty, nor so please ourselves with the delightful view of our advantage by this glorious redemption, as to pass by the design of God in giving it, lest we think Jesus came to set us free from death, and let us loose to sin. He came to free us from the slavery which we were fallen into under Satan, not to discharge us of our duty to himself, but to increase the obligation; for by redeeming us from captivity and death, he engaged us to *serve him all our lives*, which the laws of nations<sup>f</sup> as well as common gratitude doth determine. If he had not rescued us, yet we were bound to serve God, as his creatures, and as he is

<sup>f</sup> Redemptus ab hostibus reddiderit. Grot. de Jure B. et demptori serviat, donec pretium Pl. 3. cap. 9. §. 10.

Supreme Lord and lawgiver to all the world. But before we were redeemed, we could not pay that duty without fears and terrors, both because of the tyrants whom we were enslaved to, and the Majesty we had offended against. And therefore without a Redeemer, our service to God either would have been neglected, or else accompanied with such tremblings and anxieties, so devoid of love or faith or hope, that it would have appeared constrained and not voluntary, and consequently it would have been unacceptable to God and unprofitable to us. His mercy therefore is designed to remove our fears; not to quit us of our obedience, but to make it more easy and pleasant, by appeasing God's wrath, restraining Satan's power, and increasing our strength. So that now when we apply ourselves to the duties of religion, if we be discouraged at our former guilt, he will cleanse us; if we be amazed at God's justice, he will satisfy it; or if we be affrighted at Satan's malice, he will restrain it. We need not be disheartened at the difficulty—he will help us; nor doubtful of the event—he will procure us acceptance and reward. He hath taken off the terrors of an offending slave, and left us no fear but that which is useful, the fear of an ingenuous and a dutiful child, who out of love to his father is afraid to offend him, or to come short in his duty to him. This blessed condition, to be able to *serve God without fear*, with faith and hope, freedom and cheerfulness, is the great comfort of every truly pious soul; and if we be such, we

111 shall reckon the convenience to do our duty among the chiefest of our felicities, and praise God as much for the power to do good, as for any other blessing. Let us then (who pretend to more gospel than any had

§ Non sicut feram timeo, pa- μη προσκύναι τῷ πατρὶ ἀγαπᾶ αὐτόν.  
trem timeo. Ὁ γὰρ φοβούμενος Clem. Alex. Strom. 2.

then) imitate this blessed man, who in praising God for the redemption seems speedily to pass over all the benefits of pardon, and reconciliation, and glory itself; and chooseth above all to bless God for affording us opportunity and freedom to *serve him without fear*; as if holiness and undisturbed obedience were the most desirable thing in the world, and the heaven which Jesus brings. Let us behold our duty, and rejoice in that more than in our pardon and ease, and then we shew a noble love. And let this deliverance teach us to make such use of our hopes and comforts, as may quicken our love and obedience. And so this hymn shall not only be a form of praise, but a tutor to instruct us what returns we ought to make; even to walk holily in our duties to God, and righteously in our conversation with men, Titus i. 11; resolving that neither ease nor pretended gain shall entice us back to our chains, nor all Satan's menaces shall affright us from our gracious Master, whom we must now serve, not with such outward shows, Col. iii. 22, as if we only courted human approbation, but with such sincerity, as being *ever before him*, and with such constancy as may declare he hath won our hearts, and engaged our affections while we live. Therefore our ear must be bored, to signify we will now hear his word, obey his will, and never leave so sweet and dear a Master. And when we have a while found and considered the easiness of his service, the greatness and readiness of his assistance, the infiniteness and endlessness of his rewards, we shall have cause to glorify God for sending Jesus to bring us into this state, and think all our duty too little to express our obligation, and see reason to put it into our *Benedictus*, that of slaves of Satan we are become God's free-men.

§. V. AND THOU, CHILD, SHALT BE CALLED THE PRO-

PHET OF THE HIGHEST, FOR THOU SHALT &c. unto the end] God hath not only expressed his love, in raising up a Saviour for us, but in making him known to us. And since our obedience was designed, lest ignorance should make apologies, Rom. x. 14, 15, the Divine care did order it should be proclaimed to all the world. It was foretold at the great distance by the prophets, to comfort the former ages; and when it was just approaching, it was by a special harbinger pointed out as near at hand to awaken men's expectations, and summon them to prepare; for it was a great interest of all mankind, or else it had not been ushered in by so many warnings. I doubt not but holy Zachary now felt the joy which was the etymology of his son's name, and the truth of the angel's promise<sup>h</sup>: not so much in that he had a son, as in that he was to be the messenger of the Lord of hosts, the herald and harbinger to the Most High. And hence he rejoiceth not so much in the particular privilege of his Son, as in the general benefit which the world might receive by his message; and therefore he blesseth God for his duty as well as his office. For when such a messenger came to assure them of the approach of the so long expected Messiah and much desired salvation, and to let the world know for what purposes the Most High did thus descend to earth, it was to be hoped men would shake off their sloth, and, since he sent them so fair a notice, that they would not be surprised in their carelessness, but appear in an equipage suiting the greatness of his Majesty, the dearness of his love, and the excellency of his design<sup>i</sup> that was to come. And this made the good man re-

<sup>h</sup> Luke i. 14. Gaudium et exultatio.

<sup>i</sup> Τῷ δὲ βασιλείων βασιλεῖ, καὶ τῶν συμπάντων ἡγεμόνι Θεῷ, δι'

ἡμερότητα καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν ἀξιώσαντι τῷ γενητὸν ἐπισκέψεως—ποταπὸν οἶκον ἄρα χρή κατασκευάσασθαι. Philo de Cher.

joyce, hoping that when men saw their danger, and were shewed their Redeemer, they would fly into his arms for remission and grace; however, he praises God who hath done his part. And we have still the same cause of rejoicing; for that which was then done by an agent extraordinary is now performed by the ministers and ambassadors of Christ, and by the gospel which you have now heard; these being ever resident among you, do now prepare a lodging for Jesus in your hearts when he comes in the spirit to offer his grace to you. Thus is he set before you, not to be gazed at, but to be entertained; and if you upon the warning prepare for him by repentance, you shall also have remission; and then you may with Zachary bless God for the *knowledge of salvation* that the gospel gives unto you.<sup>112</sup> And that the exhortations of ministers and summons of God's word may not be as ineffectual to us, as those of this great prophet were to the Jews; consider the first cause both of God's sending his Son to us, and giving us so many warnings to receive him. It was the bowels of God's *tender mercies*<sup>k</sup> which yearned to behold us in the hands and under the sword of the merciless executioner, and moved him to send his Son to rescue us by suffering the stroke for us. It was not our merits but our misery, not our deserts but distress, that prevailed with him; we were worthy to die, yet his heart relented, and he could not see us bleed; and shall we be unmoved to behold him bleed for us, and will we die for all this? We were indeed in darkness, and could not see our danger, and if we had fallen into the pit then, it had been our calamity; but now the morning appears, John teaches, ministers preach, and

<sup>k</sup> Σπλάγγνα ἑλεως. Vulg. Viscera misericordiæ; viz. Στοργή, visceribus suis prodeuntem. Jer. xxxi. 20.  
 affectus matris erga fœtum e



Christ himself the Sun of Righteousness<sup>1</sup>, who began to spring from the East then, shines so clearly, that if we perish now it is our wilfulness, and deserves no pity. O what hath God done to shew us the right way! sending first the Morning star, the harbinger of the sun's approach<sup>m</sup>, and when the heathens were benighted in idolatry, and the Jews with evil principles, worse practices and sad afflictions, then did our Sun display his beams *from on high*; for he rose not from the earth, but his rising was his fall, his course a descent from heaven to us; and if Zachary is so rejoiced with the glimpses, we should much more with the meridian glory he now shines in. Let us not only rejoice in his light for a season, but walk by it; if we be in darkness, it will shew us our condition, and then guide us into the right way; this light will first convert us, and then conduct us. The apostle thought it was high time to awaken then, Rom. xiii. 11, 12, and sure it is more so now; for if in the light of knowledge (in the day) we do the works of darkness, that very light which we will not suffer to direct us as a guide, shall discover us to our shame. O let not this light be set up in vain! Who would not most thankfully follow a friendly light offered to him in an unknown, dark, and dangerous way? The Devil would lead you up and down after the *ignis fatuus* of enthusiasm and your own imaginations, till you sink into destruction; but this gospel is a true light; be thankful for it; for its precepts are the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and do not only admire, but follow it; and it will both shew you

<sup>1</sup> Malach. iv. 2. 'Ανατολή ut LXX. Jer. xxiii. 5. Zech. iii. 9. male Bez. Germen, confer ver. 79. et Isai. ix. 2. Camero, Grotius, Christus ἀνατολή dicitur a

Patribus, Judæi horoscopum πικρῶν vocare solent; et ἀπαύγασμα. Heb. i. 2. Syr. V. מִן־כּוֹכַב Scaliger.

<sup>m</sup> 'Η πρώτη προεγγελλίζεται μέλλοντα ἥλιον ἀνίσχαι. Philo.

where you are, and carry you where you should be, even to everlasting joy and peace. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Benedictus.*

1. Praised and BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD of Hosts, the GOD OF ISRAEL, even of all true believers; FOR HE HATH now shewed us in his holy gospel how he remembered our misery, beheld our distress, and in pity sent his Son from heaven; who hath VISITED in his incarnation, AND REDEEMED by his death, us and all HIS PEOPLE throughout the world.

2. He hath relieved us when we had no means of help, AND HATH RAISED UP the greatest Deliverer that ever was, to be A MIGHTY SALVATION FOR US, even his eternal and only Son made man, descending (as was promised) of the tribe of Judah, to succeed IN THE HOUSE, and restore the kingdom OF HIS SERVANT DAVID, and make it an everlasting dominion.

3. Our God hath not only helped us, but manifested his own truth; for now he hath made good his word, and done AS HE SPAKE by his Spirit in THE MOUTH OF all his messengers THE HOLY PROPHETS WHICH HAVE BEEN sent to give notice of this great mercy at sundry times SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN.

4. It rejoiceth our souls to see the fulfilling of that which they so often comforted God's people with, by assuring them THAT WE and they SHOULD BE SAVED by an invincible Redeemer, FROM OUR ENEMIES, sin and Satan, AND nobly rescued FROM THE HANDS, and out of the power of those that had enslaved us, and OF ALL THAT HATE US, and seek our ruin.

5. This is the blessed time, in which the God of truth was 113 pleased TO PERFORM the glorious work of our redemption, which WAS THE MERCY so much desired by, and so graciously PROMISED TO OUR FOREFATHERS. Now he hath vouchsafed to call to mind AND TO REMEMBER the engagements he made to them in HIS HOLY COVENANT, and hath made them good before our eyes.

6 Our gracious Lord is as sure TO PERFORM his word as he was ready to promise, and we now rejoice in the verification of THE OATH WHICH HE unchangeably SWARE TO OUR FOREFATHER ABRAHAM, to assure him THAT HE WOULD GIVE US

(who are his seed by faith) his own dear Son for our Redeemer.

7. And now what doth the Lord our God require in return for all his mercy and truth, but **THAT WE BEING DELIVERED** by the death of Jesus from the wrath of God, and rescued out **OF THE HAND OF OUR ENEMIES**, might never by sin put ourselves in their power again ; but being obliged by our pardon, and assisted by his grace henceforth, **MIGHT SERVE HIM** with a lively faith and cheerful hope, **WITHOUT FEAR** of being hurt by Satan, or rejected by God ?

8. For if we walk **IN HOLINESS** towards him, **AND RIGHTEOUSNESS** towards our neighbours ; and if our religion and charity be sincere, as done **BEFORE HIM**, and constant, so as we continue in it **ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE**, we answer all his expectations, and need not doubt of acceptance and reward.

9. Lord, thou camest to make us holy as well as happy, and therefore thou hast sent an harbinger, St. John, to acquaint us with thy design : **AND THOU, CHILD**, art chosen to give the world warning, and **SHALT BE CALLED THE PROPHET OF THE HIGHEST God** ; thy office shall be to fit men to receive this mighty Saviour ; **FOR THOU SHALT GO** as a herald **BEFORE THE FACE OF THE LORD**, by severe reproofs and powerful exhortations, **TO PREPARE HIS WAYS** and bring men to repentance.

10. Thou art sent to shew the danger of sin, and to **GIVE KNOWLEDGE** of him that will bring **SALVATION TO HIS PEOPLE**, that they repenting and fearing the wrath to come, may forsake all iniquity, and fly to Jesus **FOR THE REMISSION OF THEIR SINS**.

11. It is high time for us who are guilty of so many sins, to take care lest by impenitence and unpreparedness we lose the benefit of this salvation, which is provided for us **THROUGH THE TENDER bowels** of the **MERCY OF OUR GOD**, WHEREBY he pitied our desperate danger, and after our dismal night, hath given us the light of **THE DAY-SPRING**, even his only Son, who arose **FROM ON HIGH**, and leaving his heavenly throne **HATH VISITED US** :

12. And now hath set up his gospel among us, **TO GIVE LIGHT**, and discover the dangerous event of sin **TO THEM THAT SIT IN DARKNESS** through ignorance, or by horrid guilt are in

the valley AND IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH, that so they may be instructed, converted, and live; AND TO GUIDE OUR FEET when we are thus brought out of our evil and dangerous paths, that we may enter INTO THE WAY that leads to the everlasting kingdom OF PEACE. Wherefore we will observe this light, and follow this guide, and ever praise thee for it, saying, *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

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## SECTION XIII.

114

OF THE HUNDREDTH PSALM, OR THE SECOND HYMN AFTER  
THE SECOND LESSON.

§. I. THE church hath provided for our delight, as well as our necessities, by adding another hymn out of the Old Testament, to shew that both the Old and New Testaments agree in exciting us to praise God. The title shews how well it fits this place, being styled a *Psalm of praise*, and being composed for a form of public thanksgiving<sup>a</sup>, particularly to be sung by course at the oblation of the peace-offering<sup>b</sup>, it may very well be a form of praise to us Christians after we have heard the gospel of peace. And especially because the mercies which are here presented to stir us up to give thanks, are those which are most fully discovered in the holy gospel; so that it is very proper to assist our devotion, if we rightly understand it; and that we may do so shall be our next care.

<sup>a</sup> Scriptus est ut sit forma sacro Dei populo. Moller. in loc.  
publica gratiarum actionis, in <sup>b</sup> Hamm. Annot. in Psalm c.

*The Analysis of the Hundredth Psalm.*

§ II. This hymn hath four parts :	I. An exhortation to praise God, shewing,	1. The persons who must do it, viz. all nations :	Ver. 1. <i>O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands :</i>
		2. The time when it must be done, viz. when we serve him :	<i>Serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.</i>
	II. The motives to it, taken from	1. His essential excellency :	2. <i>Be ye sure that the Lord he is God,</i>
		2. His works of,	<i>It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves ;</i>
		1. Creation :	<i>We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.</i>
		2. Providence :	3. <i>O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise :</i>
	III. The exhortation renewed, shewing,	1. The place where we must praise God :	<i>Be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name.</i>
		2. The manner how :	4. <i>For the Lord is gracious,</i>
	IV. New motives to reinforce it, from	1. God's gracious nature :	<i>His mercy is everlasting :</i>
		2. His endless mercy : . . . .	<i>And his truth endureth from generation to generation.</i>
		3. His never-failing truth :	

*A brief Discourse upon the Hundredth Psalm.*

§ III. O BE JOYFUL IN THE LORD, ALL YE LANDS, &c. unto, WE ARE HIS PEOPLE, AND THE SHEEP OF HIS PASTURE] When we have heard the words of the holy gospel, we ought to consider how the divine providence dispersed the joyful sound thereof into all lands, Rom. x. 18; so that now we may justly summon *all lands* to rejoice for the mercy of our redemption, a blessing in which all mankind is concerned, and all the world is obliged to lay aside those vainer joys for lighter matters, in which it is so often employed, and to *be joyful in the Lord*, in the remembrance of his goodness. Whilst we were enemies, and without a reconciler, we could not serve him but with fear and terror; but now we may *serve him with gladness*. Hymns of praise are now become a chief part of our Christian worship, so that we must never *come before him* in our public addresses without acts of holy joy and eucharist. We

have shewed you by the penitential part, how to unburden your conscience, and to make your peace with God, and now we invite you to give a demonstration thereof, by exciting you to *come before* this Great Majesty *with a song* of rejoicing: the carnal man can rejoice in worldly contents, but in God's presence he is sad and dejected; whereas the devout soul is never so full of delight as when before God; so that if any ask us, why we mingle so many hymns with all our duties, we here declare that the Holy Ghost enjoins us so to do, and the pleasure we find in so sweet an office doth still more recommend it. And yet, ver. 2, it is reasonable as well as pleasant, for us to rejoice *in the Lord*; for, as to his nature, he is the only true God; as to his works, he is our Maker and Preserver; we neither created ourselves at first, nor have we since sustained ourselves, and he who gave and continues our being, did and doth it, that we might glorify him, Isai. xliii. 7; and moreover the gospel hath shewed us that Christ is the good Shepherd, who feeds our souls with his word, and laid down his life for his sheep; and shall we hear of this, and not sing his praise? If we should be so ungrateful, we deserve to be driven out of *his pasture*, and destroyed, rather than defended by *his hand*.

§. IV. Ver. 3. O, GO YOUR WAY INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING, AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE, &c. unto the end.] The mercies of God are so public and universal, that the private acknowledgments of single persons are not sufficient, but it is commanded that we shall all meet in sacred assemblies to join in this duty. The Jews entered in by the gates, and so passed into the courts of the sanctuary, and went no nearer, but worshipped there, Luke i. 10; but we are admitted into the house of God; and sure we ought to come thither with glad hearts, and souls full of thanksgiving. As

soon as we come to the outmost gates of the church, we should begin to think with comfort upon the goodness of him whom we come to worship. And the nearer we come, the higher our gratitude should rise; but when we are before him, we must then give him particular thanks for all his mercies to us; and besides we must, in the general, *speake good of his name*, and declare how gracious he is in himself, and how loving to all the world beside. No creature can justly speak the least evil indeed of his blessed name, but our experience obligeth us to speak all imaginable good; and the last verse shews the reason, because he is so gracious and so merciful, so faithful and so true. He ever was so to former ages, he is so to this, and will be to all generations. His very providence doth prove all this; but the gospel which hath now been read doth manifest it still more clearly. Consider how freely he gave his own Son, and you will say he is most *gracious*. Think what unworthy and miserable creatures he gave him for, and you must confess *his mercy is everlasting*. Remember how fully every thing was accomplished which had been predicted or promised, and you must acknowledge his *truth* doth never fail. O how great a gift hath he given us! How admirable a pity hath he  
 116 shewed to us! How exactly are all his promises fulfilled! Not a lesson in this part of God's word, but doth evidence some or all of this; and therefore they ought to be concluded with such a hymn of praise. And finally, as in this great work of our redemption it doth appear, that the Father was so infinitely gracious, the Son so incomparably merciful, and the Holy Ghost in all the promises of scripture so infallibly true, we may justly conclude with *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

*A Paraphrase of the Hundredth Psalm.*

Ver. 1. O BE JOYFUL and rejoice with an holy joy IN THE

LORD JEHOVAH ALL YE pEOPLe of aLL LANDS ; but you to whom the gospel is revealed, do ye more especially SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS in your hearts, AND COME as his reconciled children BEFORE HIS PRESENCE WITH A SONG of praise in your mouths.

2. For there is reason both for heathens and Christians thus to praise him ; for first, BE YE SURE, O ye Gentiles, THAT THE LORD HE is the only true GOD ; know ye IT is HE THAT HATH MADE US aLL, and gave us our being, AND NOT WE tHAT mADE OURSELVES : so that all the world is bound to bless him upon this account ; but we more peculiarly, because WE ARE those he hath chosen to be HIS PEOPLE. And since JESUS CHRIST is our SHEPHERD, we are his flock, AND THE SHEEP of his particular care ; for GOD hath put us into HIS HAND.

3. O do not then smother his praise in private, but GO YOUR WAY to his house upon all opportunities, and enter INTO HIS GATES wITH THANKSGIVING for your particular mercies, AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE for his universal goodness. Whatever duties you perform there, be sure that you BE THANKFUL UNTO HIM in your hearts, AND let your tongues SPEAK aLL tHE GOOD imaginable of HIS NAME, since all your praises will come far short of what he deserves.

4. FOR by the gospel now read it most fully appears, tHAT THE LORD is GRACIOUS in his own nature, AND HIS MERCY and pity towards us is EVERLASTING, reaching to the end of the world : and by the fulfilling these promises, his fidelity AND HIS TRUTH ENDURETH unshaken, being made good fROM one GENERATION to another GENERATION ; so that we may rely on him for ever. *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

## SECTION XIV.

117

OF THE MAGNIFICAT, OR THE FIRST HYMN AFTER THE FIRST LESSON AT EVENING PRAYER.

§. I. THIS is the first Divine canticle recorded in the holy gospel, and seems to have been composed by the Blessed Virgin, while she with unspeakable joy reflected upon all the promises of the Old Testament,



now about to be fulfilled in that holy conception and happy birth, of which God had designed her to be the instrument, and therefore is properly set after the first lesson; and since we have seen all those types verified, all those predictions completed, and all those promises made good, which are contained in the Law and the Prophets concerning Christ, doubtless this must be a very fit form for a Christian's joy after the hearing thereof. And truly this with the *Benedictus* and *Nunc Dimittis* have not only been used very anciently in the western church, but are still retained in the reformed churches, both of Germany and Holland, as well as in this church. But the internal glory of this blessed hymn will best appear by the following explication:

*The Analysis of the Magnificat.*

§. II. The <i>Magnificat</i> hath two parts:  II. The reasons thereof,	I. A general thanksgiving, expressing both the manner and object of her praise, . . . . .	1. God's peculiar favour to her, which she,	1. Confesseth, by shewing,	1. Whence she is raised, ..	46, 47. <i>My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.</i>			
						2. Returneth, by praising his name for it, . . . . .	2. Whithershe is advanced,	48. <i>For he hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maiden.</i>
	2. His general providence toward all, viz.	2. Returneth, by praising his name for it, . . . . .	3. By whom this is done, . . . .	And holy is his name.				
					1. His mercy to the pious, ..	50. <i>And his mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations.</i>		
							2. His justice on the proud,	51. <i>He hath shewed strength with his arm, he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.</i>
	3. His different dealing with	1. The mighty and the meek, . . . .	52. <i>He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek.</i>					
				2. The poor and the rich, ...	53. <i>He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.</i>			
	3. His special grace in our redemption, wherein he shewed,	1. His mercy,	54. <i>He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel:</i>					
				2. His truth, ..	55. <i>As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham &amp; his seed for ever.</i>			

*A Practical Discourse upon the Magnificat.*

118

§. III. Ver. 46. MY SOUL DOT H MAGNIFY THE LORD, AND MY SPIRIT HATH REJOICED IN GOD MY SAVIOUR] The blessed Virgin, (whom God chose to be the instrument of the greatest blessing that ever the world had,) by the fruit of her lips, as well as of her womb, hath given apparent testimony of the extraordinary presence of the Divine Spirit with her, and in her. For this sacred hymn breathes forth such lovely mixtures of faith and fear, humility and love, charity and devotion, that it appears she was full of grace, as well as highly favoured. And it should be our wish and endeavour to repeat it with the same affections and holy fervours, with which she indited it. Perhaps we think we have not the same occasion; it is true, God the Word took flesh in her womb, and that was her peculiar privilege. But if we receive the word of God and the motions of the Holy Spirit that attend it, we may turn that word into flesh<sup>a</sup> by faith and obedience; if we so hear as to practise<sup>b</sup>, we do conceive Christ by faith; he is formed in us<sup>c</sup> by the overshadowing power of the Holy Ghost in a pure heart, and he is by holiness brought forth; for Christ himself calls such, Matt. xii. 50, by the name of his Mother. We are to *rejoice with all that do rejoice*; but especially when we are sharers in the mercy and advantage which occasions that joy; wherefore we are most of all obliged to rejoice with the blessed Virgin, both as she was the mother of our Redeemer according to the flesh, and because we may be so accord-

<sup>a</sup> Verbum carnem facere, est verbum in opus, scripturas in opera convertere.

<sup>b</sup> Sit in singulis Mariæ anima—Nam etsi secundum carnem una mater est Christi, secundum fidem tamen omnium fructus

est. Ambr. in Luc.

<sup>c</sup> Omnis enim anima concipit Dei verbum, si tamen immaculata et immunis a vitiis, intermerato castimoniam pudore custodiat. Idem.

ing to the spirit. The lesson we now heard is out of the Old Testament; and as there we find the records and examples of the Divine mercy to the pious and humble, and of his vengeance upon the proud and arrogant, so here we find a form of praise for those dispensations of God's providence; and since all the deliverances of God's people there related are either founded on this mercy of our redemption, flow from it, or are directed to it; this hymn will teach us to turn the Old Testament into gospel, and with the holy patriarchs ever to apply<sup>d</sup> all to this great salvation, of which all other mercies were but types. Behold then the Mother of Jesus, saying to you, *O praise the Lord with me, Psalm xxxiv. 4, and let us magnify his name together.* Let us shew forth the greatness of his power and goodness, for we cannot set out his perfections with any advantage, nor represent him greater than really he is (as we often magnify one another;) but then we *magnify the Lord*<sup>e</sup>, when we declare how great he really is; and let us advance his glory as high as is possible, for there is no danger of exceeding; our praises will be short, but they must be real; wherefore before we can bear a part in this anthem, we must get our souls affected with a sense of his infinite power, and our minds exalted with the belief of his excellent mercy; so our praise shall be no compliment, but our soul and spirit shall bear their part, and our thanksgiving shall be real as his favours are. Let his admirable love present itself to our affections until it excite our wonder and joy, our hopes and desires. And then let us still be-

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xlix. 18. Non expecto redemptionem Sampsonis quæ est salus transitoria, sed expecto redemptionem Messie filii David. Targ. in locum.

<sup>e</sup> Non ipsi faciendo ut magnus sit, qui per seipsum magnus est, sed laudando et magnum fatendo. August. enar. in Psal.

hold it, till these passions begin to be moved by the Divine love, and then they will carry a lovely notion and fair idea of it to the mind, and so effectually recommend it, that the whole inward man shall be ravished with the beautiful prospect, and every faculty of the soul, every one of the affections shall unite into a devout celebration of the Divine mercy. Behold the holiest of women; observe where she fixes her eye, and whither she directs her praises: she rejoiceth not in her own excellencies, nor doth she magnify herself, but God her Saviour; which may check our vanity, who are so apt in a prosperous success and unexpected exaltation, to sacrifice to our own deserts<sup>f</sup>, to crown ourselves, though we snatch it from the head of heaven's King; but sure since he gives the blessing, he deserves the honour<sup>g</sup>, and he that pays it not is a double thief, 119 and steals the gift and the glory also, for both are God's. She that was the mother of Jesus after the flesh, thinks it no disparagement to confess her Son to be her Saviour, but rejoices that he was so. Let not us then think we can be saved from temporal evils, much less from eternal death, without him; and let us esteem it a greater honour to us, and a surer ground of our rejoicing, that the Most High God is become our salvation, than if we had our strength in our own hands.

§. IV. Ver. 47—49. FOR HE HATH REGARDED THE LOWLINESS OF HIS HANDMAIDEN, unto FOR HE THAT IS MIGHTY HATH MAGNIFIED ME, AND HOLY IS HIS NAME] There is nothing gives the dimensions of God's love to

<sup>f</sup> Hoc ego feci, non fortuna. Dictum Timoth. Ducis.

<sup>g</sup> Tuum, Domine, est bonum, tua itaque est gloria. Qui enim de bono tuo gloriam sibi quærit

et non tibi, fur est et latro, similisque diabolo, qui voluit furari gloriam tuam. Aug. Soliloq. cap. 15.

us more truly than the sight and sense of our own vileness; when we behold ourselves so low and despicable as indeed we are, then the glories of the Divine Majesty in stooping to us, and looking on us in our low estate, will shine in their native lustre; when we see how worthless we are, and what favour we have obtained beyond our expectations as much as our deserts, then our souls will *magnify the Lord* in the apprehensions of his greatness, and our *spirits rejoice* in the admirable goodness of *God our Saviour*. Thus the blessed Virgin was inspired with these seraphical ecstasies of joy, by looking on the mean condition in which this infinite mercy surprised her: she was not arrived to the honour of marriage, and in the opinion of the daughters of Jerusalem (who esteemed it a huge reproach<sup>h</sup> and a great affliction to be without children) her estate was reputed disgraceful: and her fortunes were really very mean; for though she sprung from the blood-royal of Judah, yet she was then a poor obscure maid, unknown to the world, but regarded by him that loves to lodge in the lowest hearts (Isai. lvii. 15.) of the poor and pious, as well as in the highest heavens: she was in her lowest estate the Lord's handmaid, and devoutly served him day and night; and her piety sanctified her poverty, and drew the eye of God to regard her, as he will the meanest of us, if our obedience equal hers, and especially if our minds be as low as our estate is; for so was this excellent Virgin's, who by *lowliness* here, means not her humility; it had argued pride to have so high a conceit of her lowliness of mind, as to believe it merited God's favour; therefore it was her meanness and poverty<sup>i</sup> which she means by her *lowliness*, and

<sup>h</sup> 1 Sam. i. 11. Τὴν ταπεινότητα τῆς δουλῆς σου. LXX. pro sterilitate. Gen. xxix. 32.

<sup>i</sup> Τὴν ταπεινώσειν abjectionem

et humilem conditionem; ταπεινοφροσύνην vero humilitatem significare asserit. Erasmus.

which she so freely confesseth and heartily praiseth God for regarding. No doubt her humility was eminent in her afflicted condition; for when she was advanced to be the mother of the world's Saviour, she seeks no greater honour than to be styled *the handmaid of the Lord*, ver. 38. O blessed soul! that was ever the same, neither dejected in her affliction, nor puffed up with her exaltation, but serves God cheerfully in the one, and praises him heartily for the other. She beholds an infinite and lasting honour prepared for her, not alone among the daughters of one place or generation, as Leah<sup>k</sup>; but she was to be the mother of a universal and everlasting blessing, which all former ages had desired, and all future times should rejoice in, and both would proclaim her happy above all women, who should be the instrument of this mercy; and yet she resigns all this glory to him that gave it her, and declares whence she received it<sup>l</sup>, that not her name, but his might have the glory. And sure she deserves the more esteem, because she returned the honour to God. Wherefore they are most wretched who<sup>m</sup> disrespect her whom God hath chosen, and out of pretended hatred to superstition will scarce allow her the reverence of an excellent person; and yet no doubt she would detest those Aves and gratulations which some superstitious votaries (to the dishonour of God whom she praised) do bestow upon her, because she calls her Son *her Saviour*, and herself *the handmaid of the Lord*; so that it is our duty to reverence, but not adore her; for she will assure you, it was God's infinite power (for

<sup>k</sup> Gen. xxx. 13. Syr. pro gloria mea.

<sup>l</sup> Διὰ τί δὲ μακαριοῦσιν; ἄρα διὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀρετὴν; οὐχί, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐποίησε μετ' ἐμοῦ μεγαλεία. Theophylact. in locum.

<sup>m</sup> Æquale est enim in utraque his sectis detrimentum; quum illi quidem vilipendant sanctam Virginem, hi vero rursus ultra decorum glorificant. Epiph. tom. i. Hæc. 79.

which he is deservedly called the *most mighty*<sup>n</sup>, which wrought this miracle<sup>o</sup> of Jesus his incarnation, and which was the cause of her honour. He magnified her, 120 and therefore she magnifies him, and teacheth us to hallow his name, for it is holy and reverend, Psalm cxi. 9, in itself, and deserves to be so esteemed for ever and ever.

§. V. Ver. 50—54. AND HIS MERCY IS ON THEM THAT FEAR HIM &c. unto the end] Now that all may join with her in the praises of this most holy name, she passeth from the consideration of her personal privileges to the universal goodness of God in the constant dispensations of his providence, that we may see his mercy was not confined to that time, nor limited to one person. For as she had now experienced the bounty and kindness of him that she had served, so all God's faithful servants that ever were, and all that ever shall be, are assured to find the like. Wherefore when our particular mercies occasion our joy, let us not confine our gratitude to our private concerns, but delight to hear out of God's word those numerous instances of the rewards of holiness, and the blessings of true piety in all times, that so we may have nobler sentiments of the Divine goodness, by viewing the extent and duration of it. And that we may be the more encouraged to go on in that course which will so certainly be our advantage, let the mother of Jesus, and all holy men we read of in sacred writ, recommend the fear of God to us, which they have found so beneficial; for if we be truly religious, be our condition never so despicable or deplorable, we may be sure of help from Heaven. Was not all mankind become hopeless and helpless,

<sup>n</sup> 'Ο δυνατός, Heb. גִּבּוֹר, nomen Deut. x. 21. Psal. xxvi. 2. Acts Dei, Psal. xxiv. 8. ii. 11.

<sup>o</sup> Μεγαλεία, res miras et magnas.

when God made bare his holy arm, and helped us by him that was the strength of his right hand, Isai. lxiii. 5, dispersing our lofty spiritual enemies, who thought they had us sure their slaves for ever? And when these enemies are thus scattered, shall we fear Satan's broken forces, those instruments of his that would discourage us in our obedience, by slanders and contempt, wrongs and injuries, menaces and threatenings? No surely, we have the strength of God for us, his finger could destroy them, his hand crush them to nothing<sup>p</sup>; but he will employ the might of his arm in it, although the very breath of his displeasure, nay, the thought and imagination of his heart<sup>q</sup>, be sufficient to consume them and dissipate all their counsels, be they never so mighty in the world's eye, or high in their own imagination, they cannot harm us, nor shall not discourage us from serving God. How did the princes of the world, the Jewish Pharisees and Gentile philosophers, scorn the beginnings of the gospel, designing to crush it by power, or disgrace it by pretended holiness, or confute it by subtle arguments? but contrary to all their expectations Jesus prevailed over the ostentation of the Pharisees, the learning of the philosophers, and the legions of the Roman emperors; so that by an omnipotent but invisible arm, in a few ages, his enemies vanished, and princes' crowns were laid at his feet. Read the word of God, and observe the methods of his providence, and you shall find he hath ever appeared an enemy to those proud and lofty ones<sup>r</sup>, who are en-

<sup>p</sup> Psal. cxviii. 15. Magna Dei efficacia per digitum, major per manum, maxima per brachium indicatur. Psal. lxxvii. 16. Exod. xv. 6. Grot.

<sup>q</sup> August. legit. αὐτοῦ, in cogitatione cordis sui superbos dis-

sipavit, scil. Dominus.

<sup>r</sup> Æsopus rogatus, quid Jupiter agit? Resp. Ὑψηλὰ ταπεινοί, καὶ τὰ ταπεινὰ ἀνυψοί. ῥέα μὲν γὰρ βριάει, ῥέα δὲ βριάοντα χαλῆπτει ῥέα δ' ἀρίζηλον μινύθει, καὶ ἀθλον ἀεξεῖ. Hesiod.



throned in their own vainglories, and suppose they have strength enough to secure their grandeur; his irresistible arm shall pull them down, and set up those whom they despise in their place. Whereby he gives not only an evidence of his power, but of his wisdom and justice, for disappointment and poverty is the most smarting punishment to pride and insolence: and honour and exaltation is so unexpected to the humble, that they will be most thankful for it, and most careful to use it to his glory who bestowed it on them. Jacob and Joseph, Gideon and David, were the youngest and least considerable in their fathers' houses. Leah was hated, and Hannah (whose song of praise, 1 Sam. ii. 1, Mary here imitates) she was despised; and so was this blessed Virgin, who was so mean and obscure, that the honourable ladies and stately dames of Israel, being all ambitious to be the mothers of the Messiah, would have scorned her a place among their handmaids; yet they are passed by, and she is designed to this felicity, and she *magnifies the Lord* for it; but those that are great, and full of earthly honours, expect these favours as their due, and cannot desire them with the hunger and thirst of the poor and lowly, nor return their thanks with the like devotion; therefore these are disappointed of their hope, and *sent away empty*<sup>s</sup>, and the mercy is given to those that least expected it, and will be most thankful for it. Let us therefore be lowly in heart, when our condition is low; and if we have a  
 121 sense of our wants, and a desire after God's help, we shall be lovely in his eyes; though the world trample on us, he will exalt and fill us with all good things, even to our own admiration, and the envy of those

<sup>s</sup> Ἀποστέλλεσθαι κενοὶ dicuntur, niunt. Luc. xx. 10, 11. Job  
 qui ad aliquem veniunt, benefi- xxii. 9.  
 cium expectantes, et non inve-

who did despise us. The world is full of instances of these dispensations of providence, but the most excellent and illustrious testimony that ever was, appeared in the spiritual advantages which the Israel of God received in the giving the Messiah. We were then just ready to sink into ruin, had he not laid hold of us, Heb. ii. 16, and by his mighty arm rescued us from the pit; we were justly abdicated by God our Father, and disinherited, but Jesus comes to reconcile us, and in him we are restored to favour<sup>t</sup>, and received into grace again; and thus the promise given to Abraham is made good, and the Lord becomes the God of his seed for ever. O my soul, acknowledge the gracious dealings of thy most merciful Father, but above all, praise him for the mercies of the gospel; for what comfort were it to be raised by the fall of our temporal enemies to a fading honour, if a miserable eternity did succeed? But now by faith in Jesus thou art not only secured in thy low estate, but mayest behold an immovable throne, an immortal crown prepared for thee, high as heaven, while all the proud workers of iniquity shall fall low as hell, never to rise again: *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

*The Paraphrase of the Magnificat.*

1. O praise the Lord with me, all ye that behold his inexpressible goodness, which hath exalted my affections, and filled MY SOUL with such glorious apprehensions, that with all its powers it DOTH MAGNIFY and set forth the admirable greatness of THE LORD; my mind also AND MY SPIRIT ravished with the contemplation of his infinite goodness DOTH REJOICE with joy unspeakable IN GOD, who hath vouchsafed to become MY SAVIOUR.

2. I cannot sufficiently express his mercy, nor my gratitude; FOR HE, that is, the Majesty of heaven, by his marvellous con-

<sup>t</sup> Filius abdicatus in gratiam βασιθεῖν τὸ γένος, et Pater ἀντι-  
rediens Græcis dicitur ἀναλαμ- λήπτωρ. Scult. Exerc.

descension **HATH** REGARDED and cast a gracious eye on the poverty and **THE** LOWLINESS of my condition, who am so inconsiderable, and never aimed higher than to be reputed amongst the meanest of his servants, and to be called by the name of **HIS** HANDMAIDEN.

3. I am most despicable in the world's eyes, and vile in my own, yet he hath conferred on me a high and lasting honour; **FOR** BEHOLD he hath passed by the more noble, and chosen me to be the mother of the world's Saviour, so that **FROM** HENCEFORTH, whenever this mercy is mentioned to the honour of God, his favour toward me will be remembered by the people of **ALL** GENERATIONS, who shall bless God for it, and **SHALL** CALL ME BLESSED, and account me happy above all women.

4. But I will freely acknowledge it was not my own merit nor strength that advanced me, **FOR** HE THAT IS MIGHTY in power, and infinite in mercy, most freely hath exalted me, and **HATH** MAGNIFIED ME his poor unworthy handmaid; his therefore is the glory, his the praise, **AND** HOLY and reverend is **HIS** NAME, which I and all his servants will ever love and honour.

5. For I am not the only instance of his goodness, nor do I confine my praises to my particular occasion. All the world sees and knows that his favour **AND** HIS MERCY is ever shewed **ON** THEM THAT FEAR HIM, so that holy and pious men are blessed by him, and shall be **THROUGHOUT** **ALL** GENERATIONS while the world endureth.

6. Ye servants of the Lord, consider how in all the course of his providence, especially in this great redemption **HE** **HATH** **SHewed** STRENGTH and a mighty power; for **WITH** **HIS** ARM he hath secured and lifted up his own, and by it **HE** **HATH** **SCATTERED** the forces, and baffled the designs of **THE** PROUD, who thought they only deserved to be respected by God, and who were safe **IN** **THE** IMAGINATIONS OF **THEIR** HEARTS.

122 7. At all times he disappoints such expectations, and now, as at other times, **HE** **HATH** **PUT** **DOWN** the wise, the honourable, and **THE** MIGHTY **FROM** **THEIR** SEATS, and those thrones, on which their pride had mounted them: **AND** **HATH** **EXALTED** to that honour **THE** HUMBLE **AND** MEEK, even those whom the arrogant most despised.

8. HE HATH FILLED most plenteously the souls of THE HUNGRY that earnestly desired the least favours, and satisfied their longings WITH GOOD THINGS beyond their expectations, AND THE RICH whose pride made them think themselves fittest objects of his bounty, and yet their abundance abated their desires after it, these HE HATH disappointed and SENT EMPTY AWAY.

9. And as in all other places, so now, HE REMEMBERING the constant method of HIS MERCY, and seeing his people's distress, HATH HOLPEN and again restored HIS SERVANT ISRAEL and all faithful people to his favour and the hopes of glory, AS HE PROMISED to the saints of former ages, even to OUR FOREFATHERS; peculiarly assuring ABRAHAM that he would give a Saviour to redeem us, and bring deliverance to US AND TO HIS SEED FOR EVER. *Glory be to the Father, &c. As it was in the beginning, &c.*

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## SECTION XV.

OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH PSALM, OR THE SECOND HYMN  
AFTER THE FIRST LESSON.

§. I. INSTEAD of the former hymn, made by the most excellent of the daughters of David, we have a Psalm of David's own composing, out of which some part of the *Magnificat* was taken, viz. ver. 54, out of ver. 4. *He hath remembered his mercy and truth to the house of Israel*, and as there the strength of God's arm is celebrated, ver. 51, so here *his right hand and holy arm* is said to have *gotten the victory*. So that they are not much different, only this is more proper to be used after a lesson which treats of some great and eminent temporal deliverance granted to the people of God, being made on the occasion of some of David's victories, and yet mystically directed to the times of the Messiah, as the Jewish doctors confess; but the particulars will best be discerned by a closer enarration.

## The Analysis of the XCVIIIth Psalm.

§. II. This Psalm contains a twofold exhortation to praise God :	I. The former containing,	1. An exhortation to the doing of it,	Ver. 1. O sing unto the Lord a new song : For he hath done marvelous things.
		2. The motives to it, being	2. With his own right hand and with his holy arm hath he gotten himself the victory.
		3. His apparent glory,	3. The Lord declared his salvation, his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.
		4. His infinite mercy,	4. He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Israel, And all the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God.
	II. The latter declaring,	1. To his own,	5. Shew yourselves joyful unto the Lord, all ye lands, sing, rejoice and give thanks.
		2. To all men,	6. Praise the Lord upon the harp : sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving.
		1. The universal obligation of this duty of praise,	7. With trumpets also and shawms : O shew yourselves joyful before the Lord the King.
		2. The manner of performing it, both with	8. Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is : the round world and they that dwell therein.
		1. Vocal and	9. Let the floods clap their hands, and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord :
		2. Instrumental music,	For he cometh to judge the earth.
		1. The sea and the dry land,	10. With righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.
		2. Rivers and mountains,	
		1. The certainty of his judgment,	
		2. The equity thereof,	

## A brief Discourse upon the XCVIIIth Psalm.

§. III. Ver. 1 to 4. O SING UNTO THE LORD A NEW SONG, &c. unto ALL THE ENDS OF THE WORLD HAVE SEEN THE SALVATION OF OUR GOD] This Psalm being entitled a *new Song*, is said by the ancients to belong to the *novum seculum*, or the gospel-times, and as the lesson

doth every day present us with new wonders of God's wisdom and power, justice and mercy; so we should daily renew our song of praise, and though we sing this anthem frequently, yet a new devotion and a fresh sense of the miraculous works which God hath wrought for his church, will make it a new song every day. Wherefore let us reflect upon the chapter lately read, and consider how certainly God's enemies fall before him; he needs no assistant, *his own right hand* alone is able to *get him the victory* over all opposers; and though sometimes he use human powers, as instruments to suppress the ungodly, yet all mortal arms and forces are so weak and uncertain of themselves, that it is purely by his influence and aid they do prevail, so that his people freely confess, it is not their own arm that saves them, but his *right hand*, &c. Psalm xliv. 3, 4; and whereas when men are mighty, they are too often cruel and unjust, the Divine arm is holy as well as mighty, and he useth his power to destroy only those who deserve it. For his preserving of his own, and his righteous executions on the wicked, are so visible and clear, that the very heathens have observed it, and all the world may discern it; nor yet doth he give these salvations to his people for their merits, but purely in remembrance of his own mercy and truth; his mercy moved him to promise, and his<sup>a</sup> truth obligeth him to perform these things for the church; the house of Israel and all nations may discern it, but now that Jesus is come, we may well spiritualize this verse, and sing a new song to God, who hath not only *remembered his mercy* and his promise to the Jews, but manifested his Son for salvation to all the world, even to the utmost parts of the earth.

<sup>a</sup> Misericordia præmisit promissionem, promissio reddidit veritatem. Aug. in loc.

§. IV. Ver. 5, 6, &c. SHEW YOURSELVES JOYFUL UNTO THE LORD, ALL YE LANDS, SING, REJOICE, AND GIVE THANKS, &c. to the end.] Since the glory of God is manifested to *all lands*, they ought all to join in praising his holy name, and that by all due means which may express an hearty joy, particularly by all sorts of music, by stringed instruments and voices, and by wind instruments also; for music is the gift of God, and tends not only to express, but to beget the affection of joy; it doth compose the thoughts, calm the mind, and put the soul into a posture of grateful seriousness; and therefore we shall find it of as early use in Divine worship as any where else; and since all ages have used it so, we may use it in more solemn places, and on more extraordinary occasions, without just offence to any unprejudiced persons, especially being plainly commanded in this and other places of holy scriptures. Now as God is to be praised by all means, so also by all persons, who are understood by this figurative exhortation to seas and lands, rivers and hills, with all their inhabitants, who are properly meant by these places<sup>b</sup>; and it is intended to stir up all people, great and small, wherever they dwell, to join in blessing and praising God, because by these marvellous deliverances he doth at present *judge the earth*; and when he punisheth evil doers and saveth those who do well, he declares himself to be even at the present a righteous and equal Judge among men; but besides, the eminent overthrows of the wicked, and rescues of the pious, are signs and evidences of the last dreadful but just judgment, when God shall come to deliver all his saints for ever, and to execute eternal vengeance on their enemies; when we hear out of the lesson instances of particular deliverances and judgments, we ought to re-

<sup>b</sup> Populi fluviorum, populi montium clament. Versio Arab.

joice, not only in hopes that God will do the like here in this world, but by taking these as forerunners and assurances of the great day which is coming, when all our wrongs shall be righted, and all our losses repaired, and we shall begin an undisturbed felicity. We are indeed apter to tremble than to rejoice at this day, but <sup>125</sup> as St. Augustine notes, "We must amend our lives, and then we may joyfully expect it.—We pray," saith he, "that God's kingdom may come, yet we fear it should come; let us amend ourselves, lest we pray against ourselves." (Enar. in Psalm xcvi.) We ought all to be holy, and if we were so, we might and ought to rejoice even in God's judgments.

*The Paraphrase of the XCVIIIth Psalm.*

1. O you who have heard these new instances of God's power and mercy, SING UNTO THE LORD with a renewed devotion, A NEW SONG of praise, FOR HE HATH in all ages DONE MARVELOUS THINGS for his church.

2. When any enemies arose against it, WITH HIS OWN RIGHT HAND and power alone, AND WITH the only might of HIS HOLY ARM which is stretched out against none but sinners, HATH HE GOTTEN unto his church, and unto HIMSELF THE VICTORY over all those ungodly opposers.

3. Nor are these things done in a corner, for THE LORD hath most illustriously DECLARED these deliverances to be HIS SALVATION, and they are most just, so that HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS by them HATH HE OPENLY SHEWED and manifestly declared IN THE SIGHT OF THE HEATHEN, yea, his very enemies give testimony to his equity in destroying the wicked ones.

4. And indeed he is good to all, for HE HATH REMEMBERED HIS MERCY in promising great favours, AND his TRUTH in performing them TOWARD THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, namely his own church and people, AND ALL THE furthest corners and utmost ENDS OF THE heathen WORLD HAVE SEEN or heard of THE SALVATION both temporal and eternal, which is the proper work OF OUR GOD.

5. Wherefore as ye all partake of his mercy, O SHEW YOUR-



SELVES JOYFUL by your most public gratulations and thanksgivings UNTO THE LORD every where ALL YE LANDS and nations, SING with your voices, REJOICE in your hearts, AND GIVE THANKS with your lips.

6. Yea, call in all kinds of music to your assistance, PRAISE THE LORD with stringed instruments, playing UPON THE HARP, and that vocal music be not wanting, SING TO THE HARP and complete the harmony WITH A PSALM OF THANKSGIVING and praise.

7. And that the choir may still be fuller, bring in wind-instruments, praising the Lord WITH TRUMPETS ALSO AND SHAWMS, the shrillest and rarest music: O SHEW YOURSELVES to be JOYFUL and full of delight, when you come BEFORE THE LORD who is THE KING of heaven and earth.

8. There is no part of the world which is not partaker of his mercy, and therefore all, if they had tongues, should join in this song; however, LET THE SEA with its waves roar and MAKE A NOISE to be the *bassus*, AND let ALL the fish THAT THEREIN IS contained, THE ROUND compass of the habitable WORLD AND THEY THAT DWELL THEREIN, all bear their several parts.

9. LET THE rivers and FLOODS keep time and CLAP THEIR HANDS in applause of their Creator. LET THE HILLS and mountains dance and BE JOYFUL TOGETHER in this grand triumph BEFORE THE LORD; and there is reason for this universal joy, not only for what is past, but because these judgments are forerunners of the great day, FOR by these you may see HE COMETH shortly TO JUDGE THE EARTH, and to right all that are wronged.

10. And when he doth come, WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL HE try and JUDGE even THE heathen WORLD, who only had the light of nature, AND THE PEOPLE of his own pasture, even his church, he shall judge WITH EQUITY also, for there is no respect of persons with God. *Glory be to the Father, &c. As it was in the beginning, &c.*

## SECTION XVI.

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OF THE LAST HYMN BUT ONE, OR NUNC DIMITTIS.

§. I. THIS canticle being also recorded in the holy Gospel, indited by the Spirit, and occasioned by the manifestation of Jesus, is very properly adopted into the offices of the Christian church, and is used at this day by the Greeks as well as the Latins, and by the reformed as well as the Romanists; so that its general approbation might sufficiently vindicate our use of it; but a more particular illustration will still more conduce to express the prudence of this choice.

*The Analysis of the Nunc dimittis.*

§. II. Herein old Simeon shews,	I. His joy, by declaring,	1. His desiring no greater happiness in this life,...	Luke ii. 29. <i>Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace</i> <i>According to thy word.</i>
		2. His submission to God's will, .....	
	II. The reason thereof,	1. As to his own particular, .....	30. <i>For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,</i>
		2. As to others, because the Messiah was	31. <i>Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;</i>
		1. So plainly manifested,	32. <i>To be a light to lighten the Gentiles,</i>
		2. So greatly advantageous to	<i>And to be the glory of thy people Israel.</i>
		1. Gentiles,	
		2. Jews,	

*A Practical Discourse on the Nunc dimittis, the first Hymn after the Second Lesson.*

§. III. LORD, NOW LETTEST THOU THY SERVANT DEPART IN PEACE ACCORDING TO THY WORD. FOR MINE EYES, &c. to the end.] The author of this short and comprehensive hymn was a man eminent for his exact justice, vigorous devotion, lively faith, and extraordinary inspiration, as the holy text assures us, and it is probable he was a considerable person; very likely it was he whom the Jews call Simeon the Just, who lived at this time, (and was the son of the most famous rabbi Hillel<sup>a</sup>), who opposed the received opinion of the tem-

<sup>a</sup> Vid. Scultet. Exerc. Evang. lib. 1. cap. 61. and Lightfoot's Harmony on this place.

poral kingdom of the Messiah; for it is certain our Simeon did so, or he had never thus rejoiced over a Messiah, presented by so mean parents in swaddling-clothes at the gates of the temple. It was not the object that appeared to his eyes, but the illumination of the Spirit, and the prospect of his faith, that elevated his affections. Wherefore we need not pretend to dismiss this holy song, by alleging it was an extraordinary occasion; for the writings of the apostles, which are daily read among us, do as clearly represent the Saviour  
 127 of the world to the eye of our faith, and set him before us as evidently in the house of God, as any bodily sight could do to Simeon; and if our minds be enlightened, and our faith firm as his, we have the same occasion, and ought to rehearse it with the same devotion. The mercy is made sufficiently plain to us, and if we were but as apprehensive of the advantages it brings to us and all men, as he was, I know not why we should wish to live any longer, than till we have obtained hopes of a share in it. We say, we have houses to build, families to propagate, and designs to complete, and all before we are willing to die; that is, we desire something besides, nay (perhaps) more than an interest in Jesus; and therefore we dare not join in this noble wish. But Simeon was dead to the world before, and had been impatient of a longer stay, but only for the promise to have a sight of Jesus in the flesh. And when this long wished for happiness was come to pass, his expectations are answered, and all his desires fulfilled. He values nothing here, but humbly craves his dismissal. His holy soul that came from God, can find no rest on the waters of this world, and therefore desires to return with an olive-branch of peace to its dear Lord<sup>b</sup>, where it was sure of rest and

<sup>b</sup> Τί γὰρ καὶ ἀδικούμεθα, ὥς πρὸς ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς, θανάτῳ ἀπολυόμενοι πρὸς

joy among its best friends. He now desires leave to depart from the flesh, which he had long esteemed his prison, wherein he was confined by his infirmities<sup>c</sup>, and shut up from beholding the glories of God, which he now longs to see more than ever, by this last experience of his truth and mercy; and, knowing that death would set him free, his desires and joy begin to swell too big to be confined in the walls of flesh, and now he is even straitened till he be let loose into the regions of glory, to praise him face to face: and yet his ecstasies transport him not beyond the measures of obedience and humility; for he first asks his Master's leave, nor will he go till he have commission: only he intimates he had stripped himself of all worldly desires, and had his inner coat, his flesh, in his hands ready to lay it down and run, whenever the watchword<sup>d</sup> was given. His hopes and desires to see his Saviour had alone made his life acceptable, and the fulfilling of them makes even death most welcome to him, because he knew that Jesus came to disarm death, and (by satisfying for sin) to deprive it of that sting which made it terrible to all men. All the sin-offerings of the law were but weak armour to encounter death, nor could they so fully purge or appease the conscience, as that it should not accuse in the fatal hour; but the perfect sacrifice of the death of Jesus doth so fully avert God's wrath, that all that believe in him can triumph over death, meet it with courage, and embrace it with peace, as the end of their fears, and the entrance into their felicity<sup>e</sup>. How can he fear death that hath

τὸν Κύριον; Clem. Alex. Strom.

4. Mors Stoicis appellari solet  
Ἀπόλυσις πρὸς τοὺς συγγενεῖς.  
Arrian.

<sup>c</sup> Ἀπολύεσθαι τὸν ἀποθνήσκοντα,  
καὶ τὴν τελευτὴν ἀπόλυσιν καλοῦσι,  
τοῦτο γὰρ δέμας ὀνομάζουσι. The-

mistius ap. Stob.

<sup>d</sup> Ἐὰν δὲ σερμῆνῃ ἀνακλήτικον  
πείθεσθαι δεῖ τῷ σημαίνοντι ὡς τῷ  
στρατηγῷ. Arrian.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 55. Non est timendum quod liberat nos ab omni timendo.

his sins forgiven? or how can he doubt God's mercy that beholds his Son with faith and love? or how can he question the truth of God's promises, that embraces Jesus, the greatest of all, in his arms? He that knows God's power, is persuaded of his love, and convinced of his truth, can die in peace, and lie down with joy in the assurance of a blessed resurrection. And this we may do also; it was only their privilege who lived then to see Jesus bodily; but whoever looked on him then so as to dare to die, must behold him by faith. And thus we may see Christ, not only with Simeon presented in the temple, but with St. Stephen standing at the right hand of God; not only in his rising, but his full glory. Why then are we so fixed to this world? so desirous to stay, so loath to depart, so sad when God calls? O let us look on this our Redeemer so steadfastly, and embrace him so lovingly in our hearts, that it may appear he is dearer to us than our very lives; let us love him so entirely, that nothing may satisfy us without him; and trust so fully in his merits and mercies, that we may live cheerfully and die peaceably. Let us say with this devout old man, Lord, I do now so clearly perceive thy purposes of mercy, so confidently believe thy promises of forgiveness, and so firmly rely on the hopes of glory, that I resolve to be ever thy servant: I desire to stay no longer in this world than to get assurances for a better: earth's vanities do not make me wish to live, nor death's terrors afraid to die. If thou callest me this day, Lord, I come: I can live with patience, or die in peace; for I see him that will preserve me in life or death, and gives me hopes that whether I live or die, I am the Lord's.

I was not with Simeon in the temple to behold my  
128 Saviour with my bodily eyes; but I have had *thy salvation* as clearly manifested in this thy holy word, as if

I had seen him with mine eyes. Lord, grant me thy Holy Spirit, that I may behold him with the same faith, and embrace him with the same affections that he did, and then I shall cheerfully join in a *Nunc dimittis*, and being daily ready to die, shall ever be fit to live, and thy will shall be done in my life or death. Blessed Lord! thou hast even to our days, by these holy writings, sufficiently manifested thy Son before all our faces; and it is our carelessness, ingratitude, and unbelief, that hides him from our eyes, and makes us hug these vanities, and fear to leave them. But thou hast done thy part, and I will praise thee for sending this bright and glorious sun, which shined on so many millions of wretched heathens benighted in the darkness of idolatry, and made them Christians. I will bless thee for honouring thy ancient but despised people, who were more ennobled by the birth of Jesus than by all their former royalties and victorious trophies, and instead of the bright cloud, the glory of the tabernacle, thou didst send him to pitch his tent among them who was the brightness of thy own glory. I am ravished to behold so many joyful souls blessing thee for this light which shined on them in their sins, the confines of eternal darkness, and converted and translated them into thy marvellous light. And all thy holy saints in all ages have given thee the glory for all those illustrious beams of love and charity, piety, justice and devotion, which shine in their lives, and are but the reflection of the rays of the grace of Jesus. This excellent person rejoiced, not only in his own felicity, but to behold, by the spirit of prophecy, what joy Jesus was like to bring to me, and many thousands of converts and holy men to the end of the world. Wherefore let us be glad and rejoice with him, for ourselves and all people, for the *light that shines* upon us, and the

glory that is round about us, and with all our souls sing, *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

*The paraphrase of the Nunc dimittis.*

Ver. 29. I desire not to live in this world any longer than I have laid hold of thy salvation; which since thy word and Spirit hath now discovered to me, I have all I can wish for here; therefore, LORD, NOW LETTEST THOU thy command go forth, that THY SERVANT who hath longed hitherto to enjoy thee, may DEPART quietly out of this miserable world, and be dismissed from the prison of the flesh. I can now leave it IN PEACE, being assured thou wilt make good all other promises, since in giving thy dear Son thou hast done so exactly ACCORDING TO THY WORD.

30. My desires are satisfied, and my faith confirmed as much as is possible in this world; FOR MINE EYES, enlightened by thy Holy Spirit, HAVE SEEN by faith in thy blessed word, him that is my Redeemer, and brings THY SALVATION to me, and all the world.

31. I cannot contain nor yet express my joy to behold this lovely Peacemaker, WHICH THOU HAST not only manifested in the flesh, but PREPARED by the discovery made of him in thy holy gospel, to appear most gloriously BEFORE THE FACE OF ALL PEOPLE that ever shall be hereafter.

32. This glorious Sun of Righteousness hath shined on all the earth, his word is A LIGHT TO LIGHTEN the dismal regions of the unconverted heathens, and THE GENTILES that knew not God; his doctrine instructed them, and hath converted many; and his presence and his grace is the honour AND THE GLORY of all true believers, the joy and comfort OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL, so that we, and all the world, are bound to praise thee for thy gospel and thy Son here on earth; and to continue our song to all eternity, when thou lettest us depart from hence. Amen.

## SECTION XVII.

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OF THE LAST HYMN, OR THE SIXTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

§. I. THE parallel to the former evangelical hymn is this devout Psalm, where that *saving health* <sup>a</sup> which holy Simeon saw and predicted should be a light to all nations, is desired to be accomplished in the conversion of all men. And when we have been illuminated with the doctrine of Christ out of the apostolic lessons, it is very seasonable to pray for the propagation of these Divine truths throughout the world, that we may shew our high esteem of them, our hearty gratitude for them, and our sincere desire that God may have glory, and all men benefit by them; and it is the more suitable, because these petitions are mixed with acknowledgments and praises also, as we shall more particularly now declare.

*The Analysis of the LXVIIth Psalm.*

§. II. The lxvii <sup>th</sup> Psalm consists of three petitions.	I. For ourselves, shewing,	1. What we desire from God,	Mercy, Blessing, Favour:	Ver. 1. God be merciful to us, and bless us, and shew us the light of his countenance, and be merciful unto us:
		2. Why we desire it, viz. for the conversion of all men: . . . . .		2. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.
	II. For others, the	Second petition mentioning,	1. The persons, and the act they are to do: 2. The reasons thereof:	3. Let the people praise thee, O God, yea, let all the people praise thee. 4. O let the nations rejoice and be glad: for thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.
		Third, being a repetition of the former, expressing,	1. The means to obtain good things: 2. The fruit obtained thereby:	5. Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee. 6. Then shall the earth bring forth her increase, And God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing. 7. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the world shall fear him.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 2. Vulg. salutare tuum, ut Luc. ii. 30.



*A brief Discourse upon the LXVIIth Psalm.*

§. III. Ver. 1, 2. GOD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US, AND BLESS US, &c. unto—AMONG ALL NATIONS] When we consider ourselves as members of that holy church which the Lord did first plant by the preaching, and hath ever since watered by the writings, of his holy apostles, and observe how by the daily lessons he continues still to instruct and comfort us, to exhort and reprove us; we are emboldened to beg his grace and favour to enable us to profit by them, and live according to them; and we desire he will express the kindness of his heart by the smiles of his countenance; we wish not he should *bless us* so much in riches, honours, or such like external things, but that which we count the greatest blessing, even that we may enjoy his favour and the *light of his countenance*, Psalm iv. 6, 7; and lest our sins should eclipse that lovely splendour, and hide it from us again, we pray he will be *merciful unto us*. And when we thus pray, that we and God's church may have public testimony of his good-will, and be in a prosperous estate, we do not desire it so much for our own benefit, as for the glory of God and the good of others: for when the church and people of God are holy in their lives, and successful in their affairs, it is a means to attract many to righteousness, and to spread the fame of the gospel among all nations. We may fitly therefore pray that by the aid of the Divine mercy we may live agreeably to the doctrine we have heard; for the holy lives of Christians would win more proselytes than the strongest arguments or the most charming eloquence, which, alas! are miserably weakened by the evil conversations of those who bear the name of this religion.

§. IV. Ver. 3, 4. LET THE PEOPLE PRAISE THEE, O GOD, &c. unto—AND GOVERN THE NATIONS UPON EARTH] Our

own praises are too few to answer the goodness of so great a Majesty; wherefore we summon all the world to assist us in this so necessary a duty. And because they cannot be expected to praise him who do not know him, we tacitly pray for the conversion of all people, wishing all might hear the blessed sound of these holy lessons, and thereby learn to know God; for if they know him they will love him, admire him, and celebrate his praise as well as we. While we are taught the righteous dispensations of God, we ought to pity the poor nations that do not discern his holy providence, and to pray that they with us may see how wisely the Almighty doth order, and how justly he doth judge in all places of the world; and this we may do more cheerfully, when we by faith foresee that the time shall come when every knee shall bow to Jesus, and all the *nations upon earth* shall be subject to this righteous Judge and glorious King. We hear his reasonable commands, his righteous laws, and his amiable precepts, and thereby we discern that the sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre; so that we wish all people did know and own him for their King and Governor; and then we are sure they would all praise him, and rejoice most heartily under so sweet a government as his is.

§. V. Ver. 5, 6, 7. LET THE PEOPLE PRAISE THEE, O GOD, YEA, LET ALL THE PEOPLE PRAISE THEE, &c. to the end.] If we look into all the world, we shall find both Christians and others complaining of many wants, and craving continually to be supplied; but we are here taught a more excellent way, even that all men should praise God for his former mercies, and that would be the best means to move God to bestow more; for our praises unite into a cloud, and fall down again in a shower of blessings, both temporal and spiritual. If all did heartily (as we now) sing anthems and psalms

of eucharist to our God, he would see that his former favours had a good effect upon us, and thereby be moved to give many more. This would cause him to grant the world plentiful years, and abundance of the *fruits of the earth*; this would engage him to send infinite blessings on his own people, and be a means to invite all nations to fear and serve him, when they  
 131 should see how good he is to those that be his servants.

Therefore let us praise him ourselves, let us also pray and endeavour that all others may do so also, for we find what incomparable returns we shall have for it. It will engage the whole Trinity for us, which some gather from ver. 6 and 7, where *God* is thrice named; and in the second place *our own God*, that is, God the Son, who took our own nature, and is most particularly *our own God*; and further, these universal praises will bring down all kinds of blessings both for body and soul; finally, as we began, ver. 2, to pray that all the earth might be brought to know and fear God, we conclude, ver. 7, full of hope, that by our blessing God, and his rewarding us, that prayer shall prevail, *and all the ends of the world shall fear him*, wherefore we sing, *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

*The Paraphrase of the LXVIIth Psalm.*

1. When we remember how oft we have offended against this word we have heard, we had need to say, O GOD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US and forgive us, and since we are thy people, do thou also prosper AND BLESS US; the Lord be pleased to grant us his favour, AND SHEW US evidently the same by the smiles and THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE, of which though we be unworthy, yet again we say, Pity us, AND BE MERCIFUL UNTO US, O our God.

2. THAT by our obedience to thee, and thy bounty to us, THY WAY, and the rules both of thy word and thy providence, MAY BE KNOWN by all men UPON EARTH, so that thy gospel may be propagated, AND the good news of THY SAVING HEALTH

and our redemption may be discovered **AMONG ALL**, even heathen **NATIONS**.

3. We are not sufficient alone to bless thee as thou deservest: wherefore **LET THE PEOPLE** of thy pasture **PRAISE THEE** every where, O **GOD**, for thy mercies, **YEA**, **LET ALL THE PEOPLE** of the whole world be converted by these apostolic doctrines, that when they know thee, they may all **PRAISE THEE** with one heart.

4. O **LET THE** very heathen **NATIONS** **REJOICE** in holy anthems **AND BE GLAD**, by making them to know thee, and bringing them to submit to thy happy government; **FOR THOU** art the best of all governors, thou **SHALT JUDGE THE FOLK** most justly and **RIGHTEOUSLY**, **AND** with all sweetness and equity shalt thou **GOVERN THE NATIONS** that dwell **UPON** all the **EARTH**, when they are once subject to thy laws.

5. Therefore we must say again with a fresh devotion, **LET THE Christian PEOPLE PRAISE THEE** for thy mercies, O **GOD**, in every place, **YEA**, **LET ALL THE PEOPLE** of the whole world be converted, that they may all know and **PRAISE THEE** with united hearts and voices.

6. And when we make these just acknowledgments for former mercies, **THEN SHALL THE EARTH** be comforted with seasonable showers, and **BRING FORTH** abundance of **HER INCREASE** of all sorts of fruits, **AND** as to spiritual favours, **GOD**, **EVEN** he whom we call **OUR OWN GOD**, and who is the Author of every good gift, he **SHALL GIVE US HIS BLESSING** and his grace.

7. O let us but be truly thankful, and **GOD** shall so eminently **BLESS US** both in soul and body, that all people shall observe it, and all men even to **THE ENDS OF THE WORLD** shall see it is good to serve so blessed a Master, and then they also **SHALL FEAR HIM**, and become obedient to this his holy word.  
*Glory be to the Father, &c.*

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## SECTION XVIII.

### OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

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§. I. THE holy scriptures being a perfect revelation of all Divine truth, may in a larger sense be called our

*Creed*; yet since the fundamental doctrines contained therein are dispersed, and not easily distinguished from those of lesser moment by all such as ought to understand them; it was very fit, if not necessary, for the blessed apostles to leave us one brief compendium of what was to be believed in order to our salvation, which might be soon learned, easily understood, and unanimously retained by all true Christians; and accordingly they did compose this venerable form, which still bears their name, and is called *the Apostles' Creed*. Which universal tradition was never questioned till this last unhappy age, wherein some have been so bold as to dispute the articles of this apostolic faith, and therefore no wonder if there be found others who deny the apostles to have been the authors thereof; for the articles will more easily be rejected, when they are destitute of the illustrious names of their sacred authors; wherefore I shall endeavour to prove, that the twelve apostles were the composers of this Creed (leaving the defence of the several articles to those learned expositors who purposely treat of them). Now this being more suitable to my method and design, I shall evince it, 1. by authority; 2. by reason; 3. by answering the contrary arguments urged by some against this ancient truth.

I. By authority, that is, by the concurrent testimony of the catholic church in all ages, which is the most proper witness in a matter of fact as this is; nor have we any better medium to prove the books of Scripture were written by those authors whose names they bear, than the unanimous testimony of antiquity; and by that we can abundantly prove the apostles were authors of this Creed. For Clemens Romanus in his epistle to our Lord's brother, (not to James, as some mistake, but to Simon his successor, bishop of Jerusalem, saith,

“That the apostles having received the gift of tongues, while they were yet together, by joint consent composed that Creed which the church of the faithful now holds.” Which very thing is largely set down by Ruffinus, in his preface to the Exposition of the Creed, and affirmed, not only by him, but by a cloud of other unexceptionable witnesses, whose words are too long to insert<sup>b</sup>, and their names almost too many to mention. Irenæus also expressly saith, “The church received from the apostles, and their disciples, this faith in one God the Father Almighty,” &c.<sup>c</sup> Tertullian calls it, “the rule of faith<sup>d</sup>,” affirming that “it descended to us from the beginning of the gospel, before any heretic had risen up<sup>e</sup>.” St. Ambrose positively avoucheth, “it was made by the twelve apostles<sup>f</sup>.” St. Hierome styles it, “the symbol of our faith and hope delivered from the apostles<sup>g</sup>.” St. Augustine expounds it in several places, especially in that tract (*de Fide et Symbolo*) mentioned in his Retractations<sup>h</sup>. Leo Magnus saith plainly, “This rule of faith we have received from the authority of apostolical institution<sup>i</sup>, and for the rest they do all agree in this point, as a great author assures us<sup>k</sup>; so that to dissent from this Creed was a mark of an heretic in the imperial constitutions<sup>l</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> Origen. *περὶ ἀρχῶν*. Procem. Ambros. Ser. 83. August. de Temp. Ser. 181. Maximus Turinens. Homil. Leo M. Ep. ad Pulch. Aug. Cassian. de Incarnat. Dom. lib. 6. Isidor. Hispal. de Off. Eccl. cap. 22.

<sup>c</sup> Iren. advers. Hæret. lib. 1. cap. 2.

<sup>d</sup> Tertull. de Præscrip. advers. Hæret. lib. 1. cap. 13.

<sup>e</sup> Advers. Prax. cap. 2.

<sup>f</sup> Ambros. Epist. 81. ad Syric.

<sup>g</sup> Hier. Ep. ad Pamm.

COMBER, VOL. I.

<sup>h</sup> Augustin. Retract. l. 1. c. 17.

<sup>i</sup> Leo M. Serm. 11. de Passion.

<sup>k</sup> Omnes orthodoxi Patres affirmant symbolum ab ipsis apostolis conditum. Sixtus Senens. Bibliothec. lib. 2. Verbo Apostol.

<sup>l</sup> Hanc legem sequentes Christianorum catholicorum nomen jubemus amplecti, reliquos vero dementes hæretici dogmatis insaniam sustinent. Theodos. Grat. Augusti.

All which hath prevailed with the sober and learned men of these ages, whether Roman or reformed, Lutheran or Calvinistical, to assent to this truth, as 133 may be seen in the writings of many Roman doctors, and in the works of M. Luther<sup>m</sup>, of Calvin<sup>n</sup>, Beza<sup>o</sup>, P. Martyr<sup>p</sup>, and Bullinger<sup>q</sup>. As also in the public confessions and articles of the churches of England<sup>r</sup>, Saxony<sup>s</sup>, France<sup>t</sup>, and Bohemia<sup>u</sup>, &c., this Creed is asserted to be the Apostles' own composition; and who can or dare deny or question that which so many and great names in all ages have declared for truth? What shall we believe that history delivers to us, if we be not convinced with these universal and evident proofs?

II. We will prove it by reason; for, 1, It is evident by the writings of the apostles, (most of them being indited after this composure,) that there was some brief form of words taught unto those who were baptized, and committed to their memories by oral tradition, 2 Thess. ii. 15, called the *form of doctrine*<sup>x</sup>, the *rule*<sup>y</sup>, the *depositum committed to their trust*<sup>z</sup>, the *form of sound words*<sup>a</sup>, the *faith once delivered to the saints*<sup>b</sup>; which the best expositors both ancient and modern do understand of the Creed. 2. And further, it is well known, that from the times of the apostles, there was a Creed taught to all adult Christians, a little before their baptism<sup>c</sup>, to which they were to answer, article

<sup>m</sup> Luther. de tribus Symbol. tom. 7. Colloqu. Mensal. tom. 2. p. 106.

<sup>n</sup> Calvin. Inst. lib. 2. cap. 16. §. 18.

<sup>o</sup> Beza Annot. in Rom. xii. 6.  
<sup>p</sup> P. Mart. Loc. Com. Miss. cap. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Bullinger. Decad.

<sup>r</sup> Eccl. Angl. Artic. 8.

<sup>s</sup> Saxon. Confes. cap. 5.

<sup>t</sup> Gallic Confess. ar. 5.

<sup>u</sup> Confessio Bohemic.

<sup>x</sup> Τύπον διδασκῆς. Rom. vi. 17.

<sup>y</sup> Κανόν. Galat. vi. 16. Phil. iii.

16. Κανόνα τὴν πίστιν φησίν. ΟΕΣ.

<sup>z</sup> Τὴν παρακαταθήκην. 1 Tim.

vi. 20. Fidei depositum custodi.

Hier. Παρακαταθήκη, ἡ πίστις.

S. Chrys. in loc.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Tim. i. 13. Ὑποτίπασιν ὑγιαίνοντων λόγων.

<sup>b</sup> Παραδοθεῖσα πίστις. Jude 3.

<sup>c</sup> Conc. Agathens. cap. 13.

Aug. de Tem. Ser. 115. Hier. Ep. 61. ad Pamm.

by article, when they were baptized, as I have proved elsewhere<sup>d</sup>. Now that it was this very Creed, which we call the apostles', that they answered to in their baptism, is plain from those very questions yet upon record in the Fathers, which are in the very words of this Creed<sup>e</sup>, which therefore we may reasonably believe was taught young Christians from the very beginning of Christianity. 3. We can assign the authors of all other Creeds, and can shew what Father or what council made them, but no other author of this Creed (besides the apostles) can be produced, no council composed this. Wherefore, as St. Augustine<sup>f</sup> well observes, "That which the whole church holds, and was not instituted by councils, but always retained, that is justly believed to have been delivered from apostolical authority." 4. It is certain there was a Creed in the church before any heretic arose<sup>g</sup>, and long before the meeting of the <sup>h</sup>Nicene council: and if we would know what Creed that was, doubtless it must be the apostles', for that, St. Ambrose saith, the Roman church had kept unaltered<sup>i</sup>. And that is still the most perfect of all Creeds, having all the articles of the longest, and nothing put into it, with respect to any heresy, but all the articles are short, plain, and suitable to one another; whereas most other Creeds are large in some articles, and deficient in others not then questioned. So this Creed is certainly the original and foundation of all the rest; and therefore of apostolical composure.

<sup>d</sup> Discourse of Baptism, sect. I. §. viii.

<sup>e</sup> Credis in Deum Patrem omnipotentem? et dixisti Credo. Ambr. de Sacram. lib. 2. cap. 7. Plura vide, Discoursé of Baptism, sect. I. §. viii.

<sup>f</sup> August. de Bapt. in Donat. lib. 4. cap. 24.

<sup>g</sup> Tertull. ut supra.

<sup>h</sup> — Roma et antequam Nicæna Synodus conveniret a temporibus apostolorum usque ad nunc — ita fidelibus symbolum tradidit. Vigilus in Eutych. lib. 4.

<sup>i</sup> Credatur symbolo apostolorum quod Ecclesia Romana intemeratum semper custodit et servat. Ambros. Epist. ad Syric. 81.



III. That all but the contentious may receive satisfaction, we will answer the principal objections against this truth.

*Object.* I. It is a wonder the apostles did not leave it upon record in the canon of scripture in express terms; and strange that no Father in the first two centuries hath set down the words thereof entirely.

*Ans.* There are many weighty things trusted to the church's tradition, and only hinted in scripture, (as we have proved this to be,) viz. the Sunday-Sabbath, baptism of infants, &c. And of all others there is most reason why this should not be committed to writing, because it was the Christian's watchword, and so not to be divulged to any stranger or enemy, but (as all mysteries) was to be kept secret<sup>k</sup>. Hence St. Cyril 134 lays so strict a charge upon the catechumens to whom he had taught the Creed, by no means to tell it unto any unbaptized person<sup>l</sup>; nor could any torments force the primitive martyrs to divulge this Creed, lest the heathens should deride and profane it; so that it ought not to have been written. And therefore though there be some forms which come very near it in the first ages, as that of St. Thaddæus, found by Eusebius in the archives at Edessa<sup>m</sup>, and that of St. Ignatius in two of his epistles<sup>n</sup>, and of the famous Origen<sup>o</sup>; yet they chose rather to give us the sense than the words of the Apostles' Creed, which were sufficiently preserved by the memories of those who were baptized; so that they were not divulged in writing till the world was Christian.

<sup>k</sup> Ex forma omnibus mysteriis silentii fides debeatur. Tertull. Ap. cap. 7. Vid. Lactant. Instit. lib. 2. cap. 26.

<sup>l</sup> Μηδὲν λέγε τῷ ἑξῶ. Cyr. Præf. ad Catech.

<sup>m</sup> Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 1. cap. 13.

<sup>n</sup> S. Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes. et Ep. ad Tral.

<sup>o</sup> Procem. ad lib. περὶ ἀρχῶν.

*Object.* II. If the Fathers of the primitive councils had known of any such Creed, they would not have made new ones, nor presumed to add to it, or take from it.

*Ans.* The Fathers of those councils did profess they made no new Creed, nor did they compose their confessions, as if any defect were in the ancient Creed<sup>p</sup>, only they explained some articles more fully, which some heretics then questioned; and because their creeds were grounded on and agreeing with the apostles', hence they accounted them the same; and Epiphanius calls the Nicene, the Creed delivered by the holy apostles<sup>q</sup>; and so it is called in some old Roman offices, as bishop Usher<sup>r</sup> hath observed. In some of these Creeds the difference is very little, and only in phrases, not sense, as in that of Jerusalem, Alexandria, of Marcellus of Ancyra, &c.; and if others be larger, yet we learn from Vincentius Lyrinensis<sup>s</sup>, "that a man is not another, though bigger than when he was a child; his limbs grow in largeness, not in number; if he had more or fewer limbs, he would be monstrous or defective, but the regular increase doth not hinder him from being the same: so in the articles of the faith, if they were more or fewer, it were another faith, but not, if some particulars be more largely explained."

*Object.* III. If the apostles, who were inspired by the Spirit of God, were the composers of it, then it should be of equal authority with the canon of scripture, whereas we are wont to prove the articles thereof by scripture.

*Ans.* So we prove one place of scripture by another which are all of equal authority, and our Lord

ρ Οὐχ' ὡς τὶ λειπὸν τοῖς προλαβούσιν ἐπεισάγοντες. Euagr. lib. 2. cap. 4.

<sup>q</sup> Αὐτὴ μὲν ἡ πίστις παρεδόθη

ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων. Epiph. Anchor.

<sup>r</sup> Tract. de Symb.

<sup>s</sup> Common. adv. Hær. c. 28, 29.

Jesus and his apostles did prove their doctrine from the Old Testament, to shew the harmony between them, rather than to derive authority from thence. We may say indeed, that we believe the Creed more firmly, since the articles are all found in holy scripture; yet in strict speaking, it is but the same doctrine delivered in divers manners, by writing in scripture, by tradition in the Creed; and we rejoice to find them so exactly agreeing to one another. And because the way of tradition is more liable to mistake and alteration than that of writing, therefore we confirm the Creed, and shew it hath not been changed, by its consent with scripture. Yet I do not see any inconvenience, if we shall believe the Creed divinely inspired; that as there are three Persons in the Trinity, and three principal graces, faith, hope, and charity, so each person may give us a proper rule for each of these graces; the Father hath given us the Commandments, to direct our charity; the Son the Lord's Prayer, to exercise our hope; and it is probable, that the Holy Ghost indited this Creed, for the entertainment of our faith. Nor will this be derogatory to the holy scripture, since it is the same doctrine which is in scripture; we all grant that the Holy Ghost indited the parts, why then not the whole? Sure I am Tertullian<sup>t</sup> calls this, *the rule of faith*, (as well as scripture,) and saith, "it was instituted by Christ." And the ancients quote the Creed, as well as scripture, to confute heresies, and seem to have given it the same honour, because indeed it is the same thing, called therefore the *compendium* of the gospel, and the *epitome* of holy scripture.

- 135 The other objections are trifling, and may be answered from hence; this therefore shall suffice to prove

<sup>t</sup> De Præscr. lib. 1. cap. 13.

the antiquity and authority of this Creed; which we shall not particularly explain, but only discourse these three things:

I. Why it stands in this place in our Liturgy.

II. Why it is daily repeated there.

III. How we may profit by the repetition thereof.

And this we will subjoin to the following analysis, which regularly comes in here.

*The Analysis of the Apostles' Creed.*

§. II. In the Creed are two parts, shewing what we believe,	I. Concerning ourselves,	2. That this one God is distinguished into three Persons,	1. In general, that there is one God : . . . . . Art. I. <i>I believe in God</i>				
			1. The Father described,	1. By his nature : . . . . . <i>The Father Almighty,</i>			
				2. By his works : {	Creation : .. <i>Maker of heaven and earth;</i>		
				Providence : ..			
			II. Concerning God,	1. That this one God is distinguished into three Persons,	2. The Son described by,	1. His name and offices : . . . . II. <i>And in Jesus Christ</i>	
						2. His nature,	1. His divinity : . . . . <i>His only Son our Lord,</i>
							2. His humanity : . . . . III. <i>Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,</i>
						3. His works in order to our redemption, viz.	1. His passion : . . . . IV. <i>Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, he descended into hell ;</i>
							2. His resurrection : . . . . V. <i>The third day he rose again from the dead,</i>
							3. His ascension and glory : . . . . VI. <i>He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty ;</i>
							4. His return to judgment : . . . . VII. <i>From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.</i>
						3. The Holy Ghost described by,	1. His nature, VIII. <i>I believe in the Holy Ghost ;</i>
2. His office : IX. <i>The holy Catholic Church ;</i>							
II. Concerning ourselves,	2. That we have privileges by being members thereof :	1. That we are members of an holy society, wherein,				1. We are united together : . . . . . <i>The communion of saints ;</i>	
						2. We have communion with one another : . . . .	
			3. Here, remission of sin : . . . . . X. <i>The forgiveness of sins ;</i>				
			2. Hereafter,	1. To the body : . . . . XI. <i>The resurrection of the body,</i>			
				2. To both soul and body : XII. <i>And the life everlasting. Amen.</i>			

*A General Discourse on the Apostles' Creed.*

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§. III. The place of this Creed in our Liturgy may be considered with respect to what goes before and that which follows it. 1. That which goes before it is the lessons, taken out of the word of God, for *faith*

comes by hearing, Rom. x. 17, and therefore when we have heard it, it is fit we should profess our belief thereof, thereby setting (as it were) our seals to the truth of God<sup>s</sup>, especially to such articles as the chapters now read unto us have confirmed; and whereas St. Paul telleth us, that *the word did not profit the Jews for want of faith in those that heard it*, Heb. iv. 2, we hope it may profit us, who as soon as we have heard it, do make confession of our faith. 2. That which follows the Creed is the prayers, which are grounded on it: "Faith is the fountain of prayers," saith St. Augustine<sup>t</sup>; "whence the apostle saith, *How shall they call on him on whom they have not believed?* therefore that we may pray, let us first believe." So that the reciting our Creed before we pray, is the laying a foundation whereupon to build our requests. We believe in one Almighty God, who is distinguished into three persons, the Father our Creator, the Son our Redeemer, the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier, by whom we and the whole church may have remission of sins, and the hopes of a blessed resurrection to eternal life; wherefore we may very reasonably pray to God the Father, in the name of the Son, by the assistance of the Spirit, in fellowship with the saints, for the forgiveness of our sins, and a joyful resurrection. Now for these reasons our Creed ought to be used as often as we do either solemnly read or pray, that is, in all public assemblies; but how early it began to be used in the daily offices is not certain. Jo. Boemus<sup>u</sup> saith, "that in the beginning the priests did only recite the Lord's Prayer and the Creed of the Apostles for their daily office." But I am apt to believe that this Creed

<sup>s</sup> John iii. 33. Ἐσφράγισεν ὅτι  
Θεὸς ἀληθὴς ἐστίν.

<sup>t</sup> De Verb. Dom. ser. 36.

<sup>u</sup> De morib. gentium, lib. 2.  
cap. 12.

was not used in the public service till persecution ceased, and therefore the first author of its use in the canonical hours is said to be Damasus, about the year 370; and to this day when it is used in the Roman offices, it is spoken with a low voice, to remember the times of its first use, when there was danger the heathens should overhear it<sup>x</sup>. But we know that the Christians used it before, in their private devotions: in the morning, by the counsel of St. Ambrose<sup>y</sup>, and both morning and night, as St. Augustine adviseth his catechumens<sup>z</sup>, and so it continued in all succeeding ages; for we find in the ecclesiastical laws of king Canutus, a special command for every Christian to learn and daily to use the Lord's Prayer and the Creed<sup>a</sup>, and so our pious ancestors taught us to use our Creed with our daily devotions, not as a prayer, (as some ignorantly or maliciously object,) but as a foundation for our petitions, a memento to whom they are made, and a ground of our hope that they shall be accepted.

§. IV. 2. To convince us more fully of the piety and usefulness of the daily repetition hereof, we will shew for what reasons and to what end we do it. 1. To fix it in our memories and record it there, that it may never go out of our minds, being daily revived by a fresh recital. And this being the sum of those principles by which we are to make our prayers and to square our lives, the test by which we are to discover the false doctrines of heretics<sup>b</sup>, and the temptations of

<sup>x</sup> Rubeo Nov. Ration. lib. 2. cap. 42.

<sup>y</sup> Symbolum quoque specialiter debemus, tanquam nostri cordis signaculum, antelucanis horis quotidie recensere. Ambr. ad Virg. lib. 3.

<sup>z</sup> Accipite, filii, regulam fidei quod symbolum dicitur, — et quotidie dicite apud vos ante-

quam dormiatis, antequam procedatis, symbolo vestro vos munite. De Symb. ad Catech. lib. 1.

<sup>a</sup> Spelman. Conc. Britan. vol. i. p. 549.

<sup>b</sup> Nulla enim unquam extitit hæresis quæ non hoc symbolo potuit damnari. Cœlestin. ad Nestor.

Satan; we can no more be without it, than the architect without his rule, and the goldsmith without his touchstone: so that lest the neglect of private persons should obliterate the memory of it in any, the church daily presents us with this heavenly touchstone to enable us to discover all that is contrary to the truth of  
 137 our principles, and the holiness of our profession. 2. To express our constant fidelity to Almighty God. This is our military symbol, which we learned at our baptism, when we were listed under Christ's banner; so that whilst we are in this spiritual warfare we must frequently repeat our<sup>c</sup> watchword; and especially when we are to approach to our General, to pray for his aid, and to receive his commands, then we must renew our profession, and shew our badge, to declare we are still for the Lord of Hosts<sup>d</sup>, and do hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. And when we thus protest our allegiance, and confess Jesus before men, it will assuredly move him to intercede for us before his heavenly Father, Matt. x. 32, so that it will exceedingly recommend our prayers, if we do every day reverently stand up and sincerely renew our vows of fidelity; he will hear us, and shew himself to be our God, when we protest ourselves to be his servants, Psalm cxix. 125. 3. To manifest our unity amongst ourselves, and our agreement with the whole church; that as we have one Lord, so we may have one faith, Ephes. iv. 5. If there be not unity in faith among us, there will be difference in our affections, and our prayers will be hindered thereby; for we must agree in heart as well as meet in the same place, if we expect God should

<sup>c</sup> Quando enim sine militiæ celestis militia est, devotionem sacramento, miles in tentorio, maximam fidemque desiderat. bellator in prælio. Ambr. Lact. lib. 5. cap. 20.

<sup>d</sup> Dei igitur cultus quoniam

hear us, Matt. xviii. 19. It were to be wished there were no dissent in the smallest matters amongst the servants of the same God; yet if any such be, let them not divide our worship, nor our affections, but let us rejoice that we agree in the main, and repeat this Creed together with a hearty charity, Phil. iii. 15, 16, so shall our prayers by a united force become more prevalent. These are common prayers to be presented by and for the members of the catholic church, and this Creed is the criterion to distinguish who are so<sup>e</sup>. If we therefore can heartily recite it, we do own the same faith which the glorious saints once did, and all true Christians throughout the world now do believe, so that we declare ourselves real members of Christ's holy church, and have a right to its privileges, and a share in its devotions.

§. V. 3. Now that what is done for so excellent reasons, and to such notable purposes, may be done in such a manner as to make it effectual to the ends for which it is intended; we shall next shew in what manner we must repeat it; in general, our thoughts must be fixed upon the certainty and usefulness of these truths, the happiness of those that know them, and the misery of such as are ignorant of them. But more particularly, 1. We must be heartily thankful to our gracious God, for making these Divine truths so manifest to us, which are so necessary, that we cannot be happy without them, so evident, that we are infinitely assured of them; and yet so mysterious, that all the wisdom of the world (without the help of revelation) could never have discovered them unto us. Shall Plato praise God that he was born in Greece, and educated at Athens? And the Jews daily give thanks that they

<sup>e</sup> Tessera et signaculum quo inter fideles perfidosque secer-  
nitur. Max. Taurin.



are the sons of Abraham? And shall not we much more bless our heavenly Father, who hath granted us the favour to suck in our religion with our mother's milk, and given us such advantages of birth and education, that we know these mysteries from our youth, and are scarce ever tempted to doubt of them; which kings and princes, philosophers, and the masters of all other sciences have lived and died ignorant of, Luke x. 24. For this cause the *Gloria Patri* is set at the end of St. Athanasius his Creed, and is to be supposed here also, and supplied by a devout act of gratitude, by every Christian who doth repeat this faith. 2. We must give our positive and particular assent to the whole Creed and every article thereof; we must receive it as an undoubted oracle from his mouth, who neither can nor will deceive us. If we should be tempted to doubt of any articles, we need not seek any other demonstration<sup>f</sup>, but only this, whether it be certain that God hath revealed them? If we understand the Divine veracity, we shall not inquire further; and if we would believe firmly, we ought to inquire so far. Now, I suppose, we are already satisfied, that the church hath from age to age delivered this for truth, and that the holy scripture bears witness to every article, and then we may on good grounds annex our hearty *Credo* to every sentence hereof. The word *I believe* is but twice set down expressly, but we must suppose and supply it in the beginning of each article, 138 and when we repeat the several particulars, let our hearts say to every one, 'as in the presence of God, *I believe this*. It is not sufficient to huddle up our assent in one Amen at the end, (yet some scarce do that,) but we must all with one heart and one mouth

<sup>f</sup> Τίς ἐστι ἔτι ἄθεος ἀπιστεῖν Θεῷ, πῶν, ἀπατεῖν τοῦ Θεοῦ. Clem. καὶ τὰς ἀποδείξεις, ὡς παρὰ ἀνθρώ- Alexand. Strom. 9.

aloud repeat every article, and seal it with an hearty assent. The minister's saying the Creed doth not excuse us; for if we join not with him, he professes his own faith only; and we must make it ours by a public and manifest consent. A general persuasion of some truths may suffice, because they do not much concern us; but these principles of our faith are the ground of our prayers, and the rule of our lives; so that they must be received with the same evidence that the mathematician's *postulata* are, without the admission of which he can do nothing, because all his following demonstrations do depend upon them. By this Creed we must conduct the affairs of our lives; on these principles we must venture our souls at our death; and if need be, for these eternal truths we must pour out our blood. Wherefore they are not to be barely heard from another, or slightly repeated; but we must exercise our own faith in the repetition, that we may be so rooted in the belief of them, that no pleasure may entice us to walk contrary to them, nor no threatenings affright us into a denial of them; and then we do truly believe them. 3. We must make a particular application of every article, that it may produce those effects and serve those ends for which it was revealed; so that we must recite it with a strict attention, there being enough to employ all our powers and faculties, and no time for one wandering thought. And surely we may think there is something extraordinary in these few principles so signally delivered by themselves, and separated from, as well as selected out of, the whole body of Christian verity. Doubtless they are of more consequence than any others, not because they are more true, but more useful to assist our devotions and direct our lives, than any other propositions which the word of God doth contain. So that we ought to give special

heed unto them; and as we repeat them, we must consider what kind of prayers they ought to make, and what kind of lives they ought to lead, who believe such things; for therefore God selected these principles, and delivered them so solemnly to us; therefore the church placed them here, and daily sets them before us, that our devotions may suit these principles, and our practices be the genuine products of this profession. To which end I will enlarge a little on these two points, viz. to shew, 1. how to apply the Creed, so as to assist and direct our prayers; and verily faith is so necessarily presupposed in all that pray<sup>g</sup>, that Arnobius observes the very heathens would not have called upon their false gods, if they had not first believed that they were gods, and did hear their prayers<sup>h</sup>; and surely, *he that cometh to the true God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those that fear him*, Heb. xi. 6, and therefore we are so often commanded to pray in faith without any wavering<sup>i</sup> or distrust, because we cannot pray with prudence nor courage, with zeal nor comfort, till our souls be possessed with just opinions and right notions of the God we call upon. Let us then while we repeat our Creed, contemplate the power of an Almighty Father, the love of his most merciful Son our Redeemer, and the grace of the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier, and it will excellently dispose our souls to prayer. It will teach us reverence and fear, sincerity and longing desires, hope and cheerful expectations, thus to set God before us in the glory of his

<sup>g</sup> Qua tandem poterit ratione quisquam ex animo Deum precari immortalem, nisi quidem illi syncere et candide fidem habuerit. Leges Eccles. Canuti. §. 22. Spelm. Concil. vol. i.

<sup>h</sup> Veneramini Deos et colitis, non credentes illos esse? et pro-

pitias aures vestris supplicationibus accommodare? Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. 2.

<sup>i</sup> James i. 6. Κλύδωνι θαλάσσης. Fluctus marini agitantur non progrediuntur. Vid. Jacob. v. 15. et 1 Tim. xi. 8.

attributes, and the greatness of his works. When we have professed our belief in *the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth*, how readily shall we run to him for the supply of our wants? When we have declared our assurance, that *Jesus Christ the Son of God* was made man, born among us, lived with us, died for us, rising again, and returning to heaven to plead our cause, and prepare a place to receive us; can we then forbear to cry unto God through him for pardon and peace, and all the benefits of his passion? Again, when we have protested our belief in *the Holy Ghost*, which in *the catholic church* gives *remission of sins*, and after this life shall raise up our bodies to *everlasting life*; then we shall feel our hearts strongly moved to petition for the aid of this Holy Spirit to work these graces in us, and prepare these benefits for us. The premising of our faith to our prayers removes our fears, and quickens our desires, instructs us what to ask, who to ask of, and in what manner to make acceptable addresses; so that the Creed is an excellent prepa- 139  
ratory to the following Collects, every petition in them being grounded on, directed by, or enforced from some of these articles, as will hereafter appear. II. We will shew how to apply the Creed for the regulating of our lives; for God did not reveal these mysterious truths to satisfy our curiosity, or to try our credulity, nor are they taught us to make us wiser, so much as to persuade us to become better<sup>k</sup>; and if they have not this effect upon us, our faith doth not excel the confession of devils, who believed and confessed Jesus to be the Son of God, yet opposed the purposes of that mystery, and remained devils still, Matt. viii. 29, James ii. 19. Let us not therefore repeat our Creed as a form of airy speculations, but as the rule of our practice; for indeed

<sup>k</sup> Τὸ τέλος βελτιῶσαι, οὐ διδάξαι. Clem. Alex. Pædag.

we do not enough believe any thing, until we act according to our belief. The things that worldly men believe put them upon actions agreeable to their persuasions<sup>1</sup>; the merchant believes there are jewels and rich wares in other lands, and he puts to sea, and attempts the purchase; the countryman believes he shall reap, and therefore he sows; the soldier believes he shall have victory and spoil, and therefore he fights. And doth the Christian alone believe and sit still? Are not the principles of religion surer, the hopes greater, the probabilities fairer, and the gains infinitely more than those of worldly men? Yet their faith is active and busy, ours idle and of no effect. For shame, then, let us not think we believe these principles sufficiently, till we have turned them into syllogism, and made our conversation the natural conclusion from those premises. Every man's natural logic will enable him to argue thus:

He that believes God to be Almighty, and that he did make and doth preserve him and all the world, must love and fear him:

But, *I believe in God the Father Almighty, &c.*  
Therefore I ought to love and fear him.

Or thus:

The poor sinner who believes in Jesus Christ, and is persuaded he was made man, and was *crucified, dead, and buried*, &c. to redeem all men that repent, cannot but apply himself to him with penitence and importunity for salvation:

But, I believe all this:

Therefore, I am obliged to apply myself to him with penitence and importunity for my salvation.

<sup>1</sup> Estne operis in vita negotio-  
sum aliquod quod non fide præ-  
eunte suscipiunt actores? Arnob.  
adv. gent. lib. 2. Nihil est quod

in vita geri possit, si non cre-  
dulitas præcesserit. Ruffin. in  
Symb.

The most ignorant with a little consideration, and without any rules of art, may easily find in this manner what will be the natural result of every article, and what effect it would produce in all that heartily embrace it. Would God that all the world were willing to live by these conclusions as strictly as they can easily deduce them; for if so, we should not see the practices of Christians so frequently contradict and destroy their principles. Who is so rude, but he can tell what manner of persons they ought to be, who believe in an all-seeing and most holy God, who confess a resurrection of the body, a universal and dreadful day of doom, and an eternal state of joy and misery to follow after it? And yet who is so prudent (among millions that pretend to believe all these things) to be such as they should be who make such a profession? In other cases we should think that man did not believe any danger to be in such a place, if he would go into it blindfold and unarmed; nor should we give credit to one who protested he believed there was a great treasure hard by him, if he never stirred one foot to seek it. And I fear, God will account those Christians amongst unbelievers, who say their Creed daily, yet live as if they did not believe one syllable thereof; which that it may not be your lot, and that your lives may not give your lips the lie, when you say, *I believe*, &c. we will teach you to pursue your Creed a little further than most men do, and shew you more particularly in the following paraphrase, how these articles are to be applied for the assistance of your prayers, and the amendment of your lives: and whosoever useth the Creed thus, will quickly find of what admirable advantage it is in our daily devotions.

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*A Paraphrase and Application of the Creed.*

Art. I. I BELIEVE most firmly IN one infinite and eternal GOD, a most wise and powerful, holy and pure spirit; distinguished into three Persons, the first being THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, who is the MAKER OF me and all creatures in HEAVEN AND EARTH, and the Preserver and Governor of all the world.

## APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to own him as my God and Almighty Father, by loving, fearing, and serving him; and to acknowledge him the Creator of all, by admiring his works, rightly using his creatures, relying on his providence for whatsoever I want in this world, and flying to him in all danger.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to call upon this mighty God my merciful Father, as the maker and disposer of all things; I will petition him for myself and all mankind, for food and raiment, health and wealth, protection and peace; not doubting but he will take care of the works of his own hands.

Art. II. AND I do most firmly believe IN the second Person of the glorious Trinity, JESUS CHRIST, our anointed Saviour, who is very God, equal to the Father, being HIS ONLY SON by eternal generation, and OUR LORD by the merciful redemption of our souls.

## APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to commit my salvation to the management of my Redeemer, and since he is anointed by God to be a Prophet, Priest, and King, I will observe his teaching, rely on his atonement, and submit to his authority, rejoicing that I have so divine a Saviour.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray in his name with faith, who is so dear to God, and hath such a right in me; I will call upon him for deliverance from my spiritual enemies, and the salvation of my soul, hoping I shall obtain a safe passport to the kingdom of heaven, since God's only Son is my Redeemer.

Art. III. I do also firmly believe it was this very Son of God, who being to be made man, WAS CONCEIVED free from sin BY THE overshadowing power of the HOLY GHOST, and uniting our nature to his divine nature, in due time WAS BORN OF THE blessed VIRGIN MARY, being both God and Man in one person.

APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to be most thankful for that miraculous condescension of his incarnation, learning from thence to submit to the meanest condition in order to doing good, and to keep my nature from pollution, since Jesus hath sanctified it, and united it to the divinity.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray, that I may be sustained under the necessities of this frail estate which Jesus was acquainted with; that I may be purged from the corruptions of my nature, which he was freed from, and that being regenerate by the Holy Ghost, I may be partaker of his nature, as he was of mine.

Art. IV. I do also most firmly believe, that this most holy Jesus 141 hath SUFFERED the wrath which we had deserved; for that he might redeem us, he was unjustly condemned UNDER PONTIUS PILATE the Roman governor; and WAS CRUCIFIED on the cross, till by the cruel torments sustained in his body and soul, he was really DEAD, so that as to his body, he was laid in the grave AND BURIED; as to his soul HE DESCENDED INTO HELL, to set us free from death and hell, and to conquer Satan in his own quarters.

APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to lament my sins and crucify my lusts, the causes of his bitter passion, and also to forsake them all, lest I lose the benefit of this all-saving death, and bring myself under the same curse; finally, I will learn from him to suffer patiently, and to die cheerfully whenever God pleaseth.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray, that I may not suffer the wrath of God which Jesus hath endured; that this sacrifice may avail to the forgiveness of all my offences; that I may be supported in the hour of death, and delivered from hell, since Jesus hath conquered both; and that the remembrance of his agonies and his love, may engage me to his service for ever.

Art. V. I do also most firmly believe, that when he had suffered all that God's justice required, and paid the full price for the sins of the world, THE THIRD DAY after his passion, death could no longer hold him, for HE AROSE AGAIN by his divine power unto life, shewing us that God was satisfied, and Satan



subdued, since he was delivered FROM THE DEAD, among whom our iniquities and God's anger had laid him.

## APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved not to distrust his power and mercy in my lowest estate ; to rely upon his full and complete satisfaction for the pardon of what is past, and to rise from the death of sin, that I may walk in newness of life hereafter, so shall I escape the second death.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray to my victorious and living Redeemer, to rescue me from the power of Satan, whom he hath conquered, and to quicken me by his grace, that I may live unto his glory, and pay him such a living and reasonable service, as he deserves who hath freed us from death and hell.

Art. VI. I do also most firmly believe, that when the work of our redemption was finished on earth, HE ASCENDED as a glorious Conqueror triumphantly INTO HEAVEN, from whence he came, AND SITTETH now in great glory ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, pleading his merits on our behalf, and interceding for us before THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, to reconcile us to him.

## APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to lift up my heart to him, and put my trust in him in all my troubles, to hope for the acceptance of my services by his intercession, to ascend thither now in my desires and affections, that I may ascend hereafter in person, and have the full fruition of his glory.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray to my glorified Mediator, to keep me in peace on earth, fill me with longings after heaven, and intercede for my acceptance there ; and that he will employ his interest in heaven, and his power over all the world to bring me safe to the enjoyment of himself.

142 Art. VII. I do also most firmly believe, that as he went from hence to heaven, so FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME again at the end of the world, most gloriously attended with millions of angels, to try and TO JUDGE all men according to their deeds, both THE QUICK which shall then be found alive, AND THE DEAD though departed never so long before.

APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to judge no man before the time, except myself, leaving other men's actions to receive their sentence at his tribunal, but preparing my own account, by examining and trying my own ways, repenting of my sins, and avoiding that here which would condemn me there.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to make my supplication to my Judge, who is also my Saviour, that I may ever have this terrible day in remembrance; that he will prepare me for it by making my peace with God before, so that I may be acquitted in it by a merciful sentence, and have my portion among the saints.

Art. VIII. Furthermore I BELIEVE most firmly IN the third Person of the glorious Trinity, THE HOLY GHOST, our sanctifier, who is very God proceeding from the Father and the Son, who hath written the scriptures, and doth bless all the means of grace, for our instruction, conversion, comfort, and edification.

APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to worship this Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son, to follow the good motions thereof, to honour the word of God, and attend on his ordinances; to take care I do not grieve the Holy Spirit, by delighting in impurity, and in hopes of the assistance thereof, to resist all evil, and set about every thing that is good.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray by the help of this good Spirit for the cleansing of my heart, enlightening my mind, and the subduing of my lusts; as also for a blessing on God's word and ordinances, that by the use of them I may grow in grace, till I be sanctified throughout in spirit, soul, and body, and thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Art. IX. I do also firmly believe, that Christ hath purchased, and the Spirit sanctified THE HOLY society of Christians throughout the world, called the CATHOLIC and universal church, which company of believers Satan never could, nor ever shall be able to destroy; since they are one body, united to Christ their Head by faith, and to each other by love, which causeth THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS, and produceth all offices of mutual charity among the members thereof.

## APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to praise God, who hath made me a member of this church, and to live in unity, peace, and charity with all my brethren, to profess the true faith which is preserved in it, to join in all the holy ordinances used by it, and to endeavour to bring the deceived home unto it, and to do good to all the members thereof.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray with my fellow Christians, for the peace and the safety, the increase and prosperity of the true religion, for the conversion of sinners, the reducing of heretics and schismatics; as also for the prosperity of its princes, the success of its ministers, and the unity of all its members, that by the concord and good works of all that belong unto it, it may appear to be the body of Christ.

- 143 Art. X. I do also most firmly believe, that all who are in the unity of the catholic church, upon their hearty repentance and true faith may obtain THE FORGIVENESS and the pardon of all their SINS which they have committed; so that they who do truly repent and believe, shall never be condemned for them.

## APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved never to forsake Christ's holy church, to which this privilege doth belong, as also diligently to repent of all my sins, and cheerfully to serve my God without fear, neither doubting the truth of his promise, nor the sufficiency of my Redeemer's merits.

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged daily to make an humble confession of my sins, with earnest prayers for absolution, and hearty supplications for the graces of faith and true repentance; that so I may live in God's love, and die in his favour; and that I may attain eternal happiness at the last, though I be a miserable sinner.

Art. XI. I do also most firmly believe, not only that our souls shall remain after death, but that our whole man shall be restored to life again, by THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, howsoever corrupted or dispersed, and by the reuniting thereof to the soul at the last day, through the mighty power of God.

## APPLICATION

*To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to keep my body in

*To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray to Jesus, the first begotten from

temperance, soberness, and chastity, while I live, and to resign it cheerfully when I die; not to be impatient upon the death of my friends, but to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, because I know my labour is not in vain.

the dead, for the sanctification of my vile body, and a part in the first resurrection; as also that I may be faithful unto death, and may be delivered in God's due time from all the miseries of this world, and raised up from the grave, to live with him for ever.

Art. XII. AND lastly, I do most firmly believe, that after this world is at an end, while the wicked remain in endless torments, God's servants shall behold his glory, enjoy his kingdom, and have the society of heavenly angels, in THE LIFE that hath joys unspeakable, and happiness EVERLASTING, where they shall sing praises to God for ever.

And this faith I seal with a most hearty AMEN.

#### APPLICATION

##### *To practice.*

Wherefore I am obliged and resolved to spend the moments of this transitory life well, to despise the short and empty pleasures of sin, to suffer patiently the light afflictions of this present time, and to esteem nothing too good to lose, too hard to resist, or too tedious to perform, for the obtaining a happiness so comprehensive and so endless. Amen.

##### *To prayer.*

And I am encouraged to pray to the purchaser of this glory, for faith, patience, and perseverance; that I may be comforted in all my troubles by the hopes, and carried through all my duties by the desires, of these eternal joys; and finally, that all these hopes and desires may be fulfilled in the fruition of this eternal life of glory. Amen.

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## AN APPENDIX CONCERNING ST. ATHANASIUS 144 HIS CREED.

§. I. IT is no wonder that this excellent confession hath been so much opposed and maligned by all those heretics which agree not with the church in the doctrines of the Trinity and of our Saviour's incarnation; because these two fundamental articles are so fully as-

sented here, that the false teachers have no room left for cavils or evasion, it being, as Photius saith of his other works, "a trophy of victory over every heresy, especially the Arian<sup>1</sup>;" hence some dispute against the author of this Creed, denying it to be his whose name it bears. Others abuse the work, and call it Sathanasius his Creed<sup>m</sup>, and many quarrel with the preface and conclusion; but the church of England receives and useth it once every month, besides Trinity Sunday, (for which it is most proper,) as an orthodox confession of faith, [Artic. 8. and Rubr. before this Creed,] and also thinks it probable that Athanasius was the author, whereupon it bears his name both in the Articles and the Liturgy; so that we shall vindicate this Creed both as to its author and authority, by proving, 1. that it is very probable he was the author thereof; 2. that it is very certainly a most pure and orthodox confession of faith.

§. II. 1. The author of this Creed appears to have been the great Athanasius. 1. From the occasion which that excellent defender of the catholic faith had to write it; for the church histories inform us, that he was not only cast out of his patriarchal seat at Alexandria by the malice of the Arians, but accused by them also of heresy to the Eastern and Western emperors, and to Julius bishop of Rome, as was also Marcellus an orthodox bishop of Ancyra, and some others. Whereupon these holy bishops did all apply themselves to Julius at Rome, offering to clear themselves of all suspicion of heresy before him, and a council of the neighbouring bishops, if he would send for their accusers to appear also; which the Roman bishop did; but the Arians not appearing to make good their

<sup>1</sup> Photius ad fratrem Tarsium de scriptis Athanasii. Gentilis apud Genebrard. lib. 4. et apud Surium, Chronic.

<sup>m</sup> Ita Georg. Paulus et Valen- p. 320.

charge of Sabellianism, &c., Marcellus departing left a confession of his faith with Julius, which is recorded by Epiphanius, Hær. 72; and since Athanasius was under the same accusation, he also made this confession of his faith in that synod, which we now call his Creed. [Binius Concil. tom. 1. p. 420.] It is said he composed it first at Triers, while he lived there in exile, an. 336, and afterwards sent it to Julius bishop of Rome, to whom he was accused, an. 339, and finally openly pronounced it in the aforesaid synod, an. 340; so Binius and Baronius, with Possevinus, Serarius, and others. But if more ancient testimony be required to prove this:

(2.) We have many testimonies very ancient to evidence this; Gregory Nazianzen, in his oration in praise of Athanasius, mentions “a royal gift which he presented to the emperor, a confession of his faith, received with great veneration both in the West and East<sup>n</sup>,” which place many authors ancient and modern understand of this Creed. Again, there are many places in St. Augustin which are *verbatim* taken out of this Creed, (as shall be shewed presently,) which argues that he had seen a copy of it, and some of the same passages in *Boethius de Trinitate*, anno 510, and in the fourth council of Toledo, cap. 1. anno 671, do make it <sup>145</sup> likely, that the words of this Creed were then famous, but the author being only a single person, was not always mentioned; yet the learned bishop of Armagh, in his discourse on this subject, saith, that this Creed bears Athanasius his name in the capitulars of Hincmarus archbishop of Rheims, anno 852, and in the discourses against the Grecians written by Rathrannus of Corbey<sup>o</sup>, and by Æneas bishop of Paris<sup>p</sup>, in the time

<sup>n</sup> Orat. in laud. Athanas. 44.  
45.

<sup>o</sup> Rathran. in Græc. lib. 2.

<sup>p</sup> Æneas Paris. in eosdem, lib.  
1. cap. 19. circa an. 876.

of Carolus Calvus: as also the same learned Usher mentions an old Psalter once belonging to king Athelstan (about the year 924,) where this Creed hath this title, "The Faith of Saint Athanasius of Alexandria." And by all authors ever since it hath been so called, as might be proved out of Abbo Floriacensis<sup>q</sup>, Durandus<sup>r</sup>, Jo. Beleth<sup>s</sup>, Manuel Caleca a Grecian<sup>t</sup>, Genadius, surnamed Scholarius<sup>u</sup>, and Eugenius IV<sup>z</sup>, whose words are cited at large by a learned modern author upon this subject; so that it hath borne his name in all the world for many hundred years, if not from the first composure. If it be objected, some old manuscripts give it another title; I answer, so many orthodox pieces are attributed to several Fathers by several manuscripts, and some of the canonical books have been ascribed to more authors than one; but this we are sure of, that none can put in for the author of this Creed with so fair a probability as St. Athanasius, he having writ particular tracts against those heresies which this Creed doth condemn, viz. against the Arians, the Apollinarists, the Sabellians, the deniers of the divinity of the Spirit, or Macedonians, and the followers of Paulus Samosatenus; of all which tracts this Creed is the epitome.

2. The authority of this Creed is still more certain, and if any can yet doubt of the author, none can deny the doctrine thereof to be pure and orthodox; for, 1. It contradicts expressly all those heresies which the catholic church condemned in the primitive councils. As to the Trinity, teaching us, that we must not confound the Persons (with Sabellius); "For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost," &c. Nor yet may we divide the

<sup>q</sup> Apologet. an. 1001.

<sup>r</sup> Rational. lib. 4. cap. 25.

<sup>s</sup> Explic. Divin. Offic. cap. 40.

<sup>t</sup> Contra Græcos, cap. 20.

<sup>u</sup> Pro Concil. Florent.

<sup>z</sup> Admon. ad Episcop. Armen.

substance, with Arius and Eunomius, for “the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one,” &c. Not only “the Father is God,” but “the Son is God,” which Arius denied, “and the Holy Ghost is God,” which Macedonius would not grant; and yet it doth not follow, as the Arians pretended, “that there are three Gods.” Again, as to the incarnation of our Saviour, it declares, that “he is very God of the substance of his Father,” against Arius, Samosatenus, and Photinus, “and very man of the substance of his mother,” which Apollinaris denied, “of a reasonable soul,” which the same heretic disowned, “and human flesh,” which the Valentinians allowed not; “and yet he is not two,” as Nestorius dreamed, “but one Christ. One, not by confusion of substance,” as Eutyches held, “but by unity of Person.” These are the chief heresies, and if they were wrong, and the catholic church (which condemned them) in the right, then this Creed is orthodox, and the very quintessence of the ancient divinity.

(2.) The same may further appear in that the very words of this Creed are frequently found in the writings of the orthodox Fathers. First, that passage, “so there is one Father, not three Fathers, one Son, not three Sons,” &c. is found in St. Ignatius<sup>y</sup>; and that “the Father is Almighty,” &c. in St. Augustine<sup>z</sup>; in whom also we read those words, “For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man,” &c.<sup>a</sup>. That, “neither confounding the Persons,” &c. may be seen in the confession of an old council<sup>b</sup>; and that, “the Father is God, the Son is God,” &c. is *verbatim* in Boethius<sup>c</sup>, as they who

<sup>y</sup> Ignat. Epist. ad Philippens.

item Epist. 3. ad Volusianum.

<sup>z</sup> Augustin. de Trin. lib. 8.  
item Epist. 174. ad Pascen.

<sup>b</sup> Concil. IV. Toletan. cap. 1.

<sup>c</sup> De Trinitate, initio.

<sup>a</sup> Augustin. Enchirid. cap. 36.



will consult the places will find more at large; so that this Creed is the doctrine of the most orthodox Fathers, who since its composure often speak in the words thereof.

- 146 (3.) This Creed hath been received as orthodox by all Christian churches for many centuries. The reverend bishop Usher tells us of an old Psalter written at least 1000 years ago, which is in sir Rob. Cotton's library, in which is this Creed with the title of "The Catholic Faith;" and so it may well be called, being received for such and under Athanasius his name, not only in the Latin church, but in the Constantinopolitan, in the Servian, Bulgarian, and Russian churches<sup>d</sup>; and so it is in the Lutheran churches<sup>e</sup>, in the Gallican<sup>f</sup>, and the church of England<sup>g</sup>; and Luther himself positively affirms Athanasius to be the author, calling it a bulwark to the Creed of the apostles<sup>h</sup>. The like testimonies might be multiplied out of all sober reformed divines; but these may suffice.

*Object.* But it seems to condemn all dissenters from it with too much severity.

*Ans.* Those who deny these doctrines are condemned in the scripture, (1 John ii. 22, 23. chap. v. 12.) and the heresies here opposed are called *damnable heresies*, (2 Pet. ii. 1.) And all that have read the primitive councils know it was their constant use, when they had declared the right faith, to anathematize and accurse all that did deny it; for latitudinarian principles were strangers to those days.

To conclude, therefore, there is sufficient reason for us to say this excellent Creed with a firm faith; and

<sup>d</sup> Canzonor. Epist. ad Calvin.

<sup>e</sup> Conf. Saxon. Art. 1.

<sup>f</sup> Confess. Gallic. Artic. 5.

<sup>g</sup> Artic. 8.

<sup>h</sup> Athanasii symbolum est

paulo prolixius, estque hoc velut propugnaculum apostolici symboli, ab eo contra Arianos Hæreticos conditum. De trib. Symbol.

also it will admonish us to bless Almighty God in the *Gloria Patri* which follows it, in that he hath preserved these mysteries of the Trinity and incarnation of Christ from all corruptions of heretics, delivering them down purely to us, who must admire and believe them although we cannot fully comprehend them; and may rejoice that the catholic church (differing in some other points) agrees entirely in these, and we hope shall do so to the end of the world. Amen.

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## SECTION XIX.

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OF THE VERSICLES AND THEIR RESPONSALS, BEFORE AND AFTER THE LORD'S PRAYER.

§. I. THE LORD BE WITH YOU. ANSW. AND WITH THY SPIRIT] If we have sincerely repeated our Creed together, we have professed our faith in God, and declared our unity and agreement with one another; and then we have cause to hope our prayers will prevail, since they were ushered in by faith and charity, the best preparatives to that duty. We have all owned that we have one Lord and one faith, and now we are preparing as brethren and fellow-soldiers to unite our requests, and to send them to the throne of God. But first, in token of our mutual charity, the church appoints (instead of the ancient kiss of peace) a hearty salutation to pass between the minister and people, he beginning in the phrase of Boaz to his reapers, *The Lord be with you*, (Ruth ii. 4. Psalm cxxix. 8.) which was after drawn into common use as a form of salutation to all, and used by St. Paul in his Epistles (2 Thess. iii. 16). To which the people are to return a good wish for their minister, in a form taken from the same apostle, (2 Tim. iv. 22. Gal. vi. 18.) desiring *the Lord*

*may be with his spirit*; which is no invention of our own, but mentioned in an ancient council<sup>a</sup>, and there affirmed to have been instituted by the apostles, and (as it there also appears) retained in the Liturgies, especially of the Greek church. But sure it never had a fitter place than in our excellent service, where it succeeds the Creed as the symbol and bond of peace. St. John forbids us to salute (or desire *God to be with*) any that cleave not to the right faith, 2 John v. 10, 11. But when the minister hath heard every one profess his faith, in the same words with himself, how cheerfully and without scruple may he salute them as brethren, and they requite his affection with a like return! It is too sadly true, that little differences in religion make wide separations and the most incurable animosities. Why then should not our exact agreement be as forcible an uniter of all our hearts, since the profession of the same faith hath ever been reputed the firmest bond of charity<sup>b</sup>? Wherefore, when those endearing offices have warmed our hearts with mutual love, these expressions will not barely signify the affections between the minister and his people, but may be used as the exercise of their charity by way of prayer for one another. Let the spiritual man meditate how often Satan is among the sons of God; how many of his flock which now are preparing to join with him, are oppressed with hard hearts, or disturbed with vain thoughts; and then let him earnestly pray *the Lord may be with them*, that his prayers be not in vain for them. Let the people also remember how comfortable

<sup>a</sup> Placuit ut episcopi et presbyteri uno modo salutent populum, dicentes, Dominus Vobiscum, — Et ut respondeatur a populo, Et cum spiritu tuo: sicut et ab ipsis apostolis traditum

omnia retinet oriens. Concil. Braca. I. Can. 21. an. 563.

<sup>b</sup> Αἰτίον τῆς ὁμονοίας τὸ ἀνέτατον, καὶ μέγατον περὶ τοῦ ἰσθὸς Θεοῦ δόξα. Philo.

and advantageous it will be to them, that he who is their mouth to God may have a pure heart and a fervent spirit; and with these thoughts let them most heartily requite their pastor's prayer, by desiring *the Lord to be with his spirit*, that both may (by acknowledging their insufficiency, and declaring their charity) obtain a blessing of God for each other, and find the benefit of these short petitions in every part of the succeeding offices.

§. II. LET US PRAY] We can do nothing in religion without the divine presence and assistance; and therefore the minister and people must mutually beg that for each other, and then they must join in their petitions. In the beginning of which is placed this short and ancient exhortation, so often repeated in all the old Liturgies<sup>c</sup>; whereby the priest gives the signal of battle, or the watchword, to all the assembly, that they may set on their enemies with courage, and besiege even heaven itself with a holy importunity. And as the crier of old in the heathen sacrifices proclaimed his *Hoc agite*, and warned all to attend what they were<sup>148</sup> about, so doth the minister charge you against all wandering thoughts, which are never more frequent nor pernicious than in holy duties; desiring you not to rest satisfied in his petitions for you, but to let your heart go along with him, that they may be accepted as your prayers, though pronounced with his lips. He enjoins you all to pray with him, and for one another; for it is a great work you have to do, and you must now take off your thoughts from all other things, and wholly mind this.

§. III. LORD HAVE MERCY UPON US: CHRIST HAVE &c. LORD HAVE &c.] The best beginning for our requests

<sup>c</sup> Δεήθωμεν alibi ἐκτενῶς δεήθωμεν alibi Dominum oremus; pos-  
tulemus. Vide Liturg. S. Jacobi, S. Basilii, &c.

is a petition for mercy, whereby we acknowledge our unworthiness, declare our misery, and confess we cannot expect our prayers should be heard, unless it may please God first to *have mercy upon us*. Like those poor lepers, we discerning Jesus afar off, cry out, *Unclean<sup>d</sup>*, and beseech him to have mercy on us, for we are defiled dust and ashes, and how shall we dare to draw near to him, or open our mouths before him, till he be pleased to pity and cleanse us? As to this particular form, it is originally taken out of David's Psalms<sup>e</sup>, where it is sometimes repeated twice together, to which the church hath added, *Christ have mercy upon us*, that it might be a short Litany, and a supplication for mercy to every person in the Trinity<sup>f</sup>, because we have offended every person, and are to pray to every person, and need the help of every person; calling both the Father and Holy Ghost by the same title of LORD, as being partakers of only one and the same divine nature; and the Son by another title, who also did partake of our human nature, as *Durand. Ration. lib. 4. cap. 12.* doth observe. And as Tho. Aquinas adds, being under a threefold misery, of ignorance, guilt, and punishment, we thrice implore mercy. And because we need mercy whenever we pray<sup>g</sup>, it was used both in the Eastern and Western churches, and became customary in the time of Theodosius the younger; so that it was decreed by a council<sup>h</sup>, that it should be said in the morning

<sup>d</sup> Luke xvii. 11, 12. *Eminus tanquam immundi [Lev. xiii. 45.] clamant, Jesu Domine, miserere nostri.*

<sup>e</sup> Psal. vi. 2. et Psal. li. 1. et Psal. cxxiii. 3.

<sup>f</sup> Imploramus misericordiam Domini per Kyrie eleeson, Christe, &c. Kyrie, &c. Ita ut tres articulos aliquo modo Di-

vinæ Majestatis et Trinitatis in Ecclesia celebremus. *Amalar. Fort. de Eccl. Offic.*

<sup>g</sup> Quia ante omnem orationem sacerdotum, necesse est misericordiam Domini implorare. *Durand. Rational. ut supr.*

<sup>h</sup> Et quia—dulcis et nimis salubris consuetudo intromissa est, ut Kyrie eleeson frequentius

and evening prayer, and in the communion-office with great contrition and devotion. By which it appears, that though these words were so sacred, that the heathens also used them in their prayers<sup>l</sup>, yet they learned them either from David or the Christian church, where the use of them was so familiar, that we read Antioch was delivered from an earthquake by the people's going barefoot in procession, and saying this short litany, *Lord have mercy on us*<sup>k</sup>. And no doubt if with humility and fervency we repeat it, our souls may be delivered from sin, and our following supplications made more acceptable; for it signifies, Lord be gracious<sup>l</sup> unto us, or shew compassion and favour toward us, in receiving and answering the prayers we are about to make, especially the Lord's Prayer, wherein we must not presume to call God Father, until we have entertained for grace and mercy.

But concerning the repetition of the LORD'S PRAYER in this place, our designed brevity allows us only here to say, that this being the best of all prayers, cannot be used too often; and having the best of all authors for its composer, (even him for whose sake all our requests are heard,) it may seem to consecrate the petitions annexed to it, since they are formed by this pattern, and contain nothing but what is agreeable to this form, which hath upon it the royal stamp of divine authority. Nor should the frequency of its returns abate our devotion in the use, since Jesus did thrice pray in the same words. Only as before it was applied

cum grandi compunctione dicatur, Placuit etiam nobis, ut in omnibus ecclesiis nostris ista consuetudo sancta, et ad matutinum, et ad missas, et ad vesperam Deo propitiante intromittatur. Concil. Vasens. Can. 3.

<sup>l</sup> Τὸν Θεὸν ἐπικαλούμενοι δεόμεθα αὐτοῦ, ΚΥΡΙΕ ἘΛΕΗΣΟΝ. Arrian. in Epictetum, lib. 2. cap. 7.

<sup>k</sup> Paul. Diacon. lib. 16.

<sup>l</sup> Deus sit propitius. Ita Vers. Jun. et Trem.

for the confirmation of our pardon, so now it must respect the following petitions, to which we may so heartily unite it, that they may be more acceptable for its sake, and we may make amends for any petition thereof, which was not so zealously put up (by reason of intervening distractions) when it was said before; by asking that with a doubled earnestness now, which then we forgot or slightly passed over.

- 149 §. IV. Psalm lxxxviii. 7. O LORD, SHEW THY MERCY UPON US. ANSW. AND GRANT US THY SALVATION] From the recital of that sacred form of prayer which Jesus left us, we pass to the interlocutory petitions; by this grateful variety taking off the tediousness, and adding to the pleasure of the duty; as also quickening the attention, and uniting the hearts of the performers. And herein the minister begins as the commissioned ambassador of heaven; yet the people follow and bear a part, as a badge of their honour, and an engagement to their watchfulness, charity, and devotion; while both contribute heat to each other's affections, and vigour to these short and sweet ejaculations, taken for the most part out of the great storehouse of divine offices, the Psalms of David, and being an epitome of the ensuing Collects for grace and peace, for kings, priests, and people, that they may be replenished with all sorts of blessings. The words of which sentences are so significant and comprehensive, that it will be hard to make a better collection; and yet so plain and obvious, that we discourse of them rather for the help of devotion, than any necessity of explication. This first versicle is a general petition for mercy and salvation, and seems to be the sum of all the weekly collects; for one or both of these are commonly the subject of them. We prayed for mercy in the *Lord have mercy* &c. and now we beg some visible token thereof, viz. some such wonderful

deliverance<sup>m</sup>, that all the world may see and say it is his salvation. We need mercy to pardon, pity, and help us in the way, and we desire salvation at the end; even that eternal salvation which is his by inheritance, possession, and purchase, and can only be ours in his right and by his mercy; so that it is fit we call it *his salvation*, and first crave mercy, before we presume to ask it, because we cannot otherwise merit or obtain it, but by his mercy<sup>n</sup>.

§. V. Psalm xx. ult. O LORD SAVE THE KING. ANSW. AND MERCIFULLY HEAR US WHEN WE CALL UPON THEE] The twentieth Psalm, whence this is taken, may be entitled, "A Prayer for the King," for after many petitions for his prosperity, it concludes with this summary ejaculation, even in these very words<sup>o</sup>, as the Greek interpreters and their followers do (on good grounds) read them. And for the phrase itself, it is the same with that so usual acclamation, *God save the king*<sup>p</sup>, wherein we do in one word wish the king prosperity and peace, long life and health, victory and everlasting felicity. And this we do not as many parasites, only at the coronation, when every one adores the rising sun; but we repeat it most loyally and devoutly every day, continually desiring his welfare and safety; and because in his peace we shall have peace, we humbly beg this request may always find acceptance, and that we may be heard, and our dear and dread sovereign blessed every day: withal preengaging the Almighty against a time of more especial need, viz. that when by

<sup>m</sup> Psal. lxxxvi. 17. Psal. lxiv. penult.

<sup>n</sup> Quia non aliunde inducitur Deus ut salvator, nisi quia misericors est. Calvin. in locum.

<sup>o</sup> Psal. xx. ult. LXX. Κύριε, σῶσον τὸν βασιλέα καὶ ἐπάκουσον

ἡμῶν,—&c. Ita Vulg. Lat. et Vatabl. Vide Hammond. Annot. Psal. xx. [d]

P 1 Sam. x. 24. Ch. Par. Sit felix rex. 1 Kings i. 25, 39. 2 Kings xi. 12. Alibi. Vivat rex, vel Vivat in æternum.



reason of wars or tumults we shall come in the behalf of our prince to beg a particular blessing for him and his armies, that then we may prevail. And thus the praying as well as fighting legions may be esteemed the defence and guard of his person and his rights.

§. VI. Psalm cxxxii. 9. ENDUE THY MINISTERS WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS. ANSW. AND MAKE THY CHOSEN PEOPLE JOYFUL] This prayer for the holy tribe, indited by David, seems to have been a part of the Jewish Liturgy; for it was solemnly used by Solomon at the dedication of the temple: *Let thy priests be clothed<sup>a</sup>, saith he, with righteousness*, alluding no doubt to the holy garments appointed for their ministration, which did signify that extraordinary and peculiar sanctity which was required in those who approached so near to God. The sense of which petition our church hath significantly given in the word *endue*, (lightly changed from the Latin *indue*,) which refers to the qualifications of the mind, as the word *clothe* to the covering of the body. So that here we pray, that they may have souls pure as their linen ephod, and lives spotless and holy as the garments they are clothed with; not content to have their outward man arrayed with the sign, but endeavouring to have their inward man endued and  
150 adorned with the purity signified thereby<sup>r</sup>. And this petition we make to him who hath promised to *deck his priests with health<sup>s</sup>, and to clothe them with the garment of salvation* and the robe of righteousness, *that his saints may rejoice and sing*. For the holy lives and good success of pious and painful ministers is an extraordinary delight to God's people, who therefore do

<sup>a</sup> 2 Chron. vi. 41. Exod. xxviii. 2 et 36.

<sup>r</sup> Attendat sacerdos studiose, ut signum sine significato non ferat, ut vestem sine virtute non

portet: ne forte sit similis sepulchro deforis dealbato. Innoc. de Myst. miss. lib. 1.

<sup>s</sup> Psal. cxxxii. 16. Isai. lxi. 10.

here use it as an argument to enforce their request for the ministers. For we (say they) are not of those who glory in the crimes of the ministers of God, or rejoice in their calamities; because, O Lord, we love thee and them; wherefore if thou wilt please to give them health and safety, righteousness and peace, we shall thrive under their care, and joyfully follow their good examples; the benefit and the pleasure will be ours, and the glory shall be thine for this and all thy mercies. Make them righteous, and thou wilt make us joyful.

§. VII. Psalm xxviii. 9. O LORD, SAVE THY PEOPLE. ANSW. AND BLESS THINE INHERITANCE] The kindness of the congregation to the minister expressed in the last responsal, is here most lovingly and thankfully returned and requited by him, who now prays for them<sup>t</sup>, as heartily as they for him before; which cannot but endear the priest and people one to another, since they daily do thus mutually interchange offices of love. Wherefore let both join in this comprehensive request, that God would save and deliver his people from all evil, and bless and furnish them with all good things, since they are his peculiar inheritance, and so may expect a special defence and relief from their own God. [But of this before in the *Te Deum*.]

§. VIII. 1 Chron. xxii. 9. GIVE PEACE IN OUR TIME, O LORD. ANSW. BECAUSE THERE IS NONE OTHER THAT FIGHTETH FOR US, BUT ONLY THOU, O GOD] It pleased God to make particular promises to Solomon, Hezekiah, and Josiah<sup>u</sup>, that he would *give peace in their days*. Wherefore we make bold to ask it for *our times*, from the God of peace our only defence<sup>x</sup> against our enemies. They who trust in their bow, and rely on

<sup>t</sup> Hæc verba habentur. Lit. xxxix. 8. 2 Kings xxii. 20.

S. Chrys. et S. Basil.

<sup>x</sup> Exod. xiv. 14. Deut. i. 30.

<sup>u</sup> 1 Chron. xxii. 9. Isaiah

their sword, care not to ask for peace, because they hope either to awe their foes into quietness, or to make advantage by war, as being sufficiently guarded and prepared. But we of the church of God know armies and navies are useless, not only against God, but without him, and only successful by his blessing. So that though we have both, yet we account the Divine providence our greatest security. How well this petition suited the primitive Christians every one may discern, who considers they judged it unlawful (while the emperors were heathen) to fight in their own defence<sup>y</sup>. And when prayers and tears were their only weapons, they might most justly<sup>z</sup> be earnest with God to defend them, who did so wholly depend on his protection, that his glory seemed concerned in their safety. Yet it is not improper for us now, though (blessed be God) we have Christian princes and their forces to defend us: for we wish there may be no occasion to use arms, or if there be<sup>a</sup>, we declare we rely not alone on these preparations; unless he please to bless them, we know they are unserviceable. Wherefore if it please him, we desire peace, and the keeping off invasions and rebellions for *our time*; and so will the following generations for their days, that it may appear we wish to live in peace, and do trust alone in the Lord of hosts, either to keep off war wholly, or to force our enemies to give it soon over when they find that God fighteth for us.

§. IX. Psalm li. 10, 11. O GOD, MAKE CLEAN OUR HEARTS WITHIN US. ANSW. AND TAKE NOT THY HOLY SPIRIT FROM US] Though peace be accounted the chief of all blessings, yet without grace it may do us more

<sup>y</sup> Luke xxii. 38. Ita Explic. ab Origen. in Cels. lib. 5. Ambros. de Offic. Basil. et Augustin. Vid. Arnob. lib. 1. p. 6.

<sup>z</sup> Ezra viii. 22.

<sup>a</sup> Bellum gerere malis videtur felicitas, bonis necessitas. August.

harm than good. Wherefore we conclude with an earnest supplication for grace to fit us for, and help us in, the following devotions. We are now to offer up our incense, and therefore do beseech the author and lover of purity, in holy David's words, to cleanse the altars of *our hearts*, that neither the guilt of former offences may unhallow or defile them, nor any remaining evil thoughts may disturb the holy cloud; but that <sup>151</sup> it may ascend and be a sweet savour before the throne of God. And because it is the *Holy Spirit* alone which can effect this, we pray that our hearts may be so pure as to invite this holy Dove to come unto us, and remain with us, that it may both make and keep us undefiled, in the remaining part of our prayers and of our lives. If we look back on those portions of the office which we have performed, I hope we shall have cause thankfully to acknowledge that the Divine Spirit *hath been with us*, and excited the flames of our devotion, the comfort of which aid makes us earnest for its continuance. And certainly we could never have sent up these very sacred ejaculations with such fervent spirits, united hearts, and harmonious voices, if the same Spirit of zeal and love had not inspired us. Therefore let the sweetness of this experience encourage us to beg that the Holy Ghost may stay among us, so that we may as affectionately join in those prayers, where the minister is the only speaker, as we have done in these, wherein we have had the honour and advantage of bearing our parts, and making our responsals. And indeed there is so great an harmony between these versicles and the following collects, that it is fit they should be said with one and the same devotion; these being like the titles to the collects, and here both priest and people repeat the heads of what the priest alone is to pray for more largely there. The first versicle, *O Lord, shew*

&c. answers to the Sunday Collect. The second, *O Lord, save the king*, &c. answers to the prayers for the king and his family. The third and fourth, *Endue thy ministers*, and, *O Lord, save thy people*, answer to the Collect for clergy and people. The fifth, *Give peace* &c. answers to the daily Collects for peace. The last, *O God, make clean*, &c. answers to the daily Collects for grace; which being observed, may serve for an analysis to these versicles; and so we proceed to the paraphrase.

*The Paraphrase of the Versicles and Responsals before and after the Lord's Prayer.*

*Minister.* My dear brethren in the right faith, I do most affectionately salute you; desiring THE LORD and his grace may BE WITH YOU to prosper you in that you now are doing.

*Answer.* AND we thankfully return the kindness, desiring likewise the Lord may be WITH THY SPIRIT, to make thee attentive and devout while thou speakest to God for us.

*Minister.* Let not your thoughts wander, but now LET US PRAY to God with fervency and devotion.

O LORD God the Father, pity, pardon, and HAVE MERCY UPON US, who are unworthy to call upon thee.

O CHRIST the Son of God, pity, pardon, and HAVE MERCY UPON US, whose only hope is in thy mediation and redemption.

O LORD God the Holy Ghost, pity, pardon, and HAVE MERCY UPON US, and assist us in these our supplications.

OUR FATHER WHICH ART &c.

*Priest.* Consider our sin and misery with compassion, O LORD, and now SHEW some token of THY MERCY UPON US to our comfort.

*Answ.* AND GRANT US now and ever such wonderful deliverances from all evil, that we may surely obtain THY SALVATION at the last.

*Priest.* O LORD, thou Governor of all the world, be pleased to bless, preserve, and SAVE THE KING thine own anointed.

*Answ.* AND MERCIFULLY HEAR US, whose peace is linked together with his prosperity, WHEN WE CALL UPON THEE for him, especially on extraordinary occasions.

*Priest.* O Lord, do thou ENDUE the hearts and minds of <sup>152</sup> THY MINISTERS WITH the purity, and holiness signified by their garments, that so their lives may be full of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*Answ.* AND thereby thou shalt MAKE us and all THY CHOSEN PEOPLE out of our love to them, and spiritual benefit by them, exceeding JOYFUL in such exemplary and faithful pastors.

*Priest.* Be graciously pleased, O LORD, continually to deliver and SAVE THY PEOPLE out of all their troubles.

*Answ.* AND of thy infinite bounty and goodness to BLESS THINE INHERITANCE which thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.

*Priest.* Mercifully GIVE PEACE to all the world, and especially to thy church, that we may quietly serve thee IN OUR TIME, O LORD, thou God of peace.

*Answ.* We pray to thee for peace, BECAUSE THERE IS NO OTHER can keep us from war, or save us in it; for we trust not in any one THAT FIGHTETH FOR US, since none can secure us, BUT ONLY THOU, O GOD of hosts.

*Priest.* And since we are now to proceed in our supplications, we pray thee, O God, by thy grace MAKE CLEAN and purify OUR HEARTS from sin, that no evil thoughts may remain WITHIN US while we approach unto thee.

*Answ.* As thou hast begun to assist and cleanse us, so be pleased to continue thy help, AND TAKE NOT the sweet and necessary aid of THY HOLY SPIRIT away FROM US; but let it rest upon us in the remaining part of our devotions, and for ever. Amen.

## SECTION XX.

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OF THE COLLECTS FOR THE WEEK AND FESTIVAL-DAYS.

§. I. It cannot be expected we should here give a particular account of all the collects for Sundays and other festival days, which are so numerous, they cannot be contained in the narrow limits of this essay, and so plain that they need not any curious explication; especially when the pious soul, by exercising itself in other

parts of these offices after our proposed method, is become expert in enlarging into devout meditations; it will then easily do the same in these Collects without a monitor. And besides, the Epistle and Gospel annexed to them are generally an excellent commentary upon them; and some judge they take their name from their being collected out of those portions of holy writ. But if we regard the use of the word in the scripture and the Fathers<sup>a</sup>, they may rather seem to be denominated from the collection and gathering together of the people into religious assemblies, among whom (so collected) these prayers were to be used. For which cause, though they be short<sup>b</sup>, yet all that any need ask for, is comprehended in them, and collected into a small epitome. Therefore let the whole congregation join most unanimously in them, and apply them to their own and their brethren's known necessities. And observe that they are all directed to the Father through the Son, who liveth and loveth us<sup>c</sup>, and so will hear us, and who reigneth in heaven, and therefore can help us. The beginning is commonly the ground on which we are induced to ask, and after the petition made, it is commonly backed with some motive taken from the glory of God, or our benefit, which we believe will be the effect of our being heard. But if any desire a more distinct information of the subject of every Collect, they may learn by the following table; wherein

<sup>a</sup> Dies Collectæ: Vulg. Lat. Levit. xxiii. 36. Collectionem: Vulg. Heb. x. 25. Et apud patres collectam celebrare, sæpissime. Inde preces illæ, a populi collectione collectæ, appellari cœperunt. Alcuinus.

<sup>b</sup> Existimant orationem brevem collectam appellari quod sacerdos—omnium petitiones com-

pendiosa brevitate colligit. Walafrid. Strab. Vid. Durand. Rational. lib. 4. cap. 15.

<sup>c</sup> Generaliter ad Patrem dirigitur, et terminatur in nomine Filii—et paulo post—O Pater, exaudi per filium tuum, qui hoc vult et potest; vult quia vivit, et potest quia regnat. Durand. Rational. lib. 4. cap. 15.

they are so ranged, that besides the direction in the public, we may by frequent use thereof, be always armed with a compendious and ejaculatory prayer of the church's composure, pertinent to all occasions ; which may be of excellent use to those who desire to be always on their guard against the enemy of their souls.



## The Table of the Weekly and Festival Collects.

		<i>Sundays and Festivals.</i>	
§. II. In the Collects we pray either	I. For ourselves, and that either for	3. Grace, with respect to the	1. Manifold gifts from God . . . . . St. Barnabas.
			2. Special favours of God, {
			1. Pardon of sin . . . . . { 12, 21, and 24th after Trinity.
			2. Benefit of Christ's death : . . . . . { Annunciation.
			3. Acceptance for his sake : . . . . . { Purification.
			1. Author of it, the Spirit, for our { 2nd after Epiphany.
			2. Illumination : . . . . . { 1st after Ascension.
			3. Direction : . . . . . { Whitsunday.
			19th after Trinity.
			1. Hearing : . . . . . { St. Bartholomew.
	2. The soul and things spiritual,	3. Grace, with respect to the	2. Reading : . . . . . { St. Luke.
			3. Fasting : . . . . . { 2nd of Advent.
			1st of Lent.
			10 and 23rd after Trin.
			1st of Advent.
			1st after Easter.
			1. Convert us from sin : { St. Andrew.
			2. Rescue us from temptation : . . . . . { St. James.
			3. Enable us to do good : . . . . . { St. Matthew.
			4th of Advent.
	3. End of it, viz. to	3. Grace, with respect to the	4th after Epiphany.
			18th after Trinity.
			5th after Easter.
			1, 9, 11, 13, 17, 25th after Trinity.
			Epiphany.
			6th after Epiphany.
			1. Regeneration : . . . . . { Nativity of Christ.
			2. Charity : . . . . . { Quinquagesima.
			3. Mortification : . . . . . { Circumcision.
			Easter Even.
	4. Kinds of it, viz.	3. Grace, with respect to the	4. Contrition : . . . . . { Ashwednesday.
			5. Sincerity : . . . . . { 3rd after Easter.
			6. Love of God and his laws : . . . . . { 4th after Easter.
			6th and 14th after Trin.
			7. Heavenly desires : . . . . . { Ascension day.
			1. Right : . . . . . { Trinity Sunday.
			8. Faith, { 7th after Trinity.
			2. Firm : { St. Thomas.
			St. Mark.
			6th of Lent.
	2. The body and things temporal,	3. Grace, with respect to the	2nd after Easter.
			St. Stephen.
			St. Paul.
			St. Philip and Jacob.
			St. John Baptist.
			All Saints.
			Holy Innocents.
			2, 3, 4, and 20th after Trinity.
			1. God's providence : { St. Michael.
			2. Guarding of angels : . . . . . { 3rd of Lent.
	3. The body and the soul both :	3. Grace, with respect to the	1. Enemies : . . . . . { Sexagesima.
			2. Judgments : . . . . . { Septuagesima.
			4th of Lent.
			3rd & 4th after Epiph.
			8th and 15th after Trin.
			2nd and 5th of Lent.
			Good Friday, three Collects.
			5th after Epiphany.
			Good Friday, first two Collects.
			St. John.
	1. Without the church,	3. Grace, with respect to the	1. Truth : . . . . . { St. Simon and Jude.
			2. Unity : . . . . . { 5, 16 & 22nd after Trin.
			3. Peace : . . . . . { St. Matthias.
			1. Fit : . . . . . { St. Peter.
			2. Diligent : . . . . . {
	2. Within the church, that	3. Grace, with respect to the	1. The people may be kept in {
			2. The ministers may be {

## SECTION XXI.

OF THE TWO COLLECTS PECULIAR TO MORNING PRAYER.

§. I. GRACE and peace, which are the subjects of these two prayers, are blessings so useful that we must always ask them whensoever we pray. The Eastern church prayed thrice for peace in one day's service<sup>a</sup>; and we may well ask it twice, and grace as often; especially having such ancient and devout forms to ask them in, whose method and order we will next unfold.

*The Analysis of the Morning Collect for Peace.*

§. II. In this Collect are five parts :	I. The person, to whom we make this request,	1. His nature : . . . . .	O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord,
		2. His attributes : . . .	in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life,
	II. The reasons, why we make it,	1. Our happiness in knowing him : . . .	whose service is perfect freedom ;
		2. Our privilege in serving him : . . .	defend
	III. The request itself, specifying,	1. The thing desired : . .	us thy humble servants
		2. The persons for whom : . . . . .	in all assaults of our enemies ;
		3. The time, when :	that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries,
	IV. The ends for which we make it,	1. The securing our faith : . . . . .	through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
		2. The removing our fears : . . . . .	
	V. The means, by which we hope to prevail :		

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§. III. O GOD, WHO ART THE AUTHOR OF PEACE AND LOVER OF CONCORD] Peace hath always been reputed the chiefest of earthly blessings; both because of its own excellencies, and because it is the parent and nurse of all other comforts. So that in the sacred dialect<sup>b</sup> *peace* is used to signify all good things, plenty and

<sup>a</sup> Chrysost. Homil. 3. in 3. ad Coloss.

<sup>b</sup> Numb. vi. 26. Et in salutationibus, Pax est? Gen. xxix. 6.

Comprehendit χαλπεω, ὑγιαίνεω, καὶ εὐπαρτεῖν. Drusius. Si non pax, nihil. Adag. Hebr. apud Fagium.

prosperity, health and joy, with the undisturbed fruition of all these. It is indeed the felicity of earth, where all is nothing without it, and the type of heaven, where all is comprehended in it; wherefore the Christians, according to God's command<sup>c</sup>, did ever follow it in their lives, and beg it in their prayers; both for the heathens under whom they lived, and for the church of God. In obedience to the divine command, and in imitation of such examples, we also make it a part of our daily office to pray for peace. And sure none can approach the throne of grace, to ask this blessing, with greater encouragements than we have. For (as the church intimates) our God is *the Author of peace*<sup>d</sup>, and owns the peacemakers for his children. And instead of that dreadful title, *the Lord of hosts*, is in the New Testament ever styled the *God of peace*; because he loves it, and procures it<sup>e</sup>, and commands us to make it and seek it with all men. So that this petition can never be rejected, which is no more than, Lord, give us that which is agreeable to thy nature, pleasant in thy sight, and which we by thy command continually do follow after. And as he delights to preserve his servants in peace from all enemies without, so also to behold them live in unity and concord within among themselves. Hence he also commends and commands this<sup>f</sup>, and did so firmly bind the souls of the first believers in the bands of amity and concord, that all the powers of darkness could not dissolve those holy combinations. Wherefore set these attributes of God be-

<sup>c</sup> Heb. xii. 14. Jerem. xxix. 7. Psal. cxxii. 6.—*Orbem quietum.* Tertull. Apolog. Pro arcendis hostibus—et vel auferendis vel temperandis adversis, ut et pro gentium pace et salute. Cypr. Ep. ad Demetr.

<sup>d</sup> Isai. xlv. 7. Matt. v. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Rom. xv. 33. et xvi. 20. Phil. iv. 9.

<sup>f</sup> Psal. xlv. 9.

<sup>g</sup> Psal. lxxviii. 6. et cxxxiii. 1, 2. Rom. xv. 5, 6. Acts ii. 44.

fore you when you are to beg for peace, and let them encourage you to ask cheerfully, and teach you (as you desire to please him) to endeavour after peace and concord in your lives, that your actions may not contradict your prayers, wherein you own yourselves sons of the God of peace.

§. IV. IN KNOWLEDGE OF WHOM STANDETH OUR ETERNAL LIFE, WHOSE SERVICE IS PERFECT FREEDOM] It will further encourage our request, if we here make humble acknowledgments of, and pleasing reflections upon our happiness in having relation to such a God, the perfect knowledge of whom (John xvii. 3.) is the felicity of the saints of heaven, and his worship and service the safety of his holy ones on earth. It is the most ravishing of all the delights of eternity, for blessed spirits to take a full prospect of the immense treasures of the unexpressible love of the God of peace; and to behold how he rejoices over the endearing concord and inseparable amities of his chosen ones in his everlasting peace. And that little discovery which he hath made to us in this imperfect state, of his power and providence, his care and love, his delight in our concord, and procuring our peace, even this is a great help to bring us to those endless joys. For when we behold the miseries of the world, the rage of wicked men, and the malice of Satan, we might despair to escape them, and comply with them in evil for our present safety, and so lose our eternal happiness. But only that we know him who is able to secure us, and delights in our peace; and therefore we fly to him, call upon him, and encourage ourselves in him in the greatest appearance of danger; and thereby are kept *through faith unto salvation*, and brought at last to that *eternal life*, which we should scarce dare to hope for, but by our knowledge and experience of his power and mercy. This is the reason why we now

entreat him for peace, whom we know to be the *Author of peace*, even that we may improve our knowledge of him, to be a means to bring us to that never-ceasing  
 157 peace in his heavenly kingdom, and to shew us from whom we must seek protection all the way. And further we declare, that we neither are nor desire to be masters of ourselves. For our freedom consists, not in being subject to no superior, but in that we are the servants<sup>b</sup> of so almighty and gracious a Master, who preserves us a thousand times safer than if we were left to ourselves. We are now directly engaged in his service, and therefore under his immediate protection; so that now we have *perfect freedom* even from the very fears of any harm from the worst of our enemies. We that trembled like slaves, and bowed our necks to sinful compliances in every appearance of danger, do now pray most cheerfully for peace, and are as free men brought out of those dismal expectations *with a high hand*<sup>i</sup>, because we know *our God whom we serve is able to deliver us*; who (before we knew and worshipped him) were ever *through fear of death subject unto bondage*. Nay, our will is now become free, because we choose what pleaseth God, his will and our choice agrees, and so nothing can hinder us from attaining our desire<sup>k</sup>. We have resolved nobly to be no longer slaves to evil, but ever to do good; trusting in the defence of God's providence, and the help of his grace; and since we know and serve one greater than the world, or the prince of darkness either, neither

<sup>b</sup> John viii. 32, 36. 1 Cor. vii. 22. Τὸ ἐλεύθερον τὸ μηδενὸς ὑπὴ-  
 κοον, ἀλλὰ πράττειν ἀπλῶς τὰ δο-  
 κοῦντα ἑαυτῷ. Dion. Prus. Orat.  
 14. At vid. Rom. vi. 22. Christo  
 servire regnare est. Bern. Τοῦτο  
 αὐτὸ καὶ ἐλευθερία καὶ βασιλεία, τῷ

Θεῷ δουλεύσαι. Nazianz. de Pace.

<sup>i</sup> Exod. xiv. 8. Dan. iii. 17.  
 Heb. ii. 15.

<sup>k</sup> Ἐλεύθερός ἐστιν—ὁ ζῶν ὡς  
 βούλεται, ὃν οὐκ ἀναγκάσαι ἐστίν,  
 οὔτε κωλύσαι, οὔτε βιάσασθαι. Ar-  
 rian. in Epictet.

their threats nor flatteries can conquer or enslave us. So long as we believe in him our souls are free.

§. V. DEFEND US THY HUMBLE SERVANTS IN ALL ASSAULTS OF OUR ENEMIES] When we consider ourselves environed on every side with enemies and dangers, that we are neither likely to escape, nor able to overcome by our own strength; and also behold our God, who is *the author of peace and lover of concord*, the joy of his saints, and the deliverer of his servants; we shall earnestly call upon him to *defend us*, and that very petition is an acknowledgment of our own insufficiency to defend ourselves, the sense whereof will exceedingly quicken this request. But if we expect protection from God, we must profess ourselves his *humble servants*, not in compliment or flattery, but as little states when in distress they petition for succour from their potent neighbours, must acknowledge (with Ahaz<sup>1</sup>) *they will be their homagers and servants, if they will deliver them*; so must we sincerely protest ourselves God's servants, and in this form surrender up ourselves into his protection. And if we be real therein, we shall be owned as the confederates of heaven, and from thence shall have legions of angels sent in to our aid, whenever we desire or need them. But woe be to those hypocrites who fly to God in a storm, and call themselves his servants feignedly for present safety, but when the violence is over, forsake him again. This folly and baseness will cause him to cast out them and their prayers also. But let us remember we have many enemies who sometimes oppose us from without, and other times do divide us among ourselves; that we may really own ourselves the servants of the God of peace, by loving and following

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 9. Brevis formula deditiois. Plenius ap. Romanos; Populum, urbem, agros,

delubra, divina humanaque omnia in vestram ditionem dedimus. Grotius in loc.

peace with all men, and living in concord with one another<sup>m</sup>. The world, the Devil, and wicked men (who are principally meant here) will assault us. But whether the foes of goodness assail us with the flattery or reproaches of their tongues, the violence and cruelty of their hands, the scorn and contempt of their feet, we have a help at hand, who discerns their most secret plots, baffles their most politic designs, and invalidates their most formidable preparations. And if we beg his assistance, he will either deliver us from them, or save us in their assaults, and support us under them, that they shall not harm us. Wherefore (if we observe) the church teacheth us not, to pray that we may not be assaulted; for that is not to be expected; if we consider the pride, opposition, and malice of evil men to all good, and the inveterate enmity of Satan, who sets them all on work, we may as well hope to wash the Ethiopian white, or tame a tiger, or to behold the lion eat grass, as that these should give us no disturbance<sup>n</sup>.

158 God did never promise this, nay, he bids us not to expect it<sup>o</sup>, and forewarns us of it, that we may be forearmed for it; so that we might displease God if we asked (contrary to his revealed will) that we might never be assaulted. Wherefore let it suffice us, that we be supported in all the assaults of our enemies, and receive no prejudice from them as to our eternal interest. If God makes us like the miraculous bush, unburnt in the midst of these flames, it will be all one as if we had not been thrown into the fire. Only thus

<sup>m</sup> Extraneos advenientes si sapimus juncti repellamus, quoniam etiamsi singuli lædimur universi periclitemur. Hermocr. ap. Thucyd. Diabolus semper vos munitos inveniat et armatos concordia, quoniam pax vestra bellum est illi. Tert. ad Martyr.

<sup>n</sup> Si quis vitiorum omnium inimicus rectum iter vitæ insistere cœpit, primum propter morum differentiam odium habet; quis enim potest probare contraria? Petron. Arbit.

<sup>o</sup> Isai. lix. 13. John xvi. 33. Ecclus. ii. 1.

the malice of the wicked is discovered, disappointed and disgraced, our patience is proved and made apparent, and the divine power and mercy is more manifested, and his name more glorified, than if we had never been assaulted. In this we wholly submit to him, whether he will keep the spirits of evil men from rising against us, or (as he did in the instances of Laban, Esau, and Saul) turn their rage into amicable compliances or fruitless attempts.

§. VI. THAT WE, SURELY TRUSTING IN THY DEFENCE, MAY NOT FEAR THE POWER OF ANY ADVERSARIES, THROUGH THE MIGHT OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD] We aim higher in this request than a bare safety from the violence and craft of our enemies; desiring such frequent and constant experiments of his care and providence, that we may never tremble at any danger, while we *surely rely on his defence*; but that we may be freed from our own fears, which make us as miserable and dejected as the evils themselves<sup>P</sup>. It is fear that ruins our hope, banishes our joy, dissipates our counsels, and strips us of all powers of resistance. So that either we become our own executioners, or lie open to the designs of our enemies, who commonly enter at the breach our own fears have made. But the only remedy for such terrors is a firm trust on the divine protection, and till that faith fail, we are most safe, be our foes never so numerous or potent, their menaces and preparations never so great; till they can conquer heaven, they cannot terrify us, who cannot perish while *God is for us*. Let us then pray for daily assurances of his providence and love, and those will still add vigour to our faith, till we

<sup>P</sup> Plura sunt quæ nos terrent quam quæ premunt, et sæpius opinione quam re laboramus, timore—aut augemus dolorem aut fingimus aut præripimus. Seneca. Pavor mihi omnem sapientiam ex animo expeccat. Ennius.



become undaunted and invincible *through the might of Jesus*. We acknowledge, it were the highest folly to be thus confident, if we relied on our own strength; but if we do not *fear our adversaries*, it is because our Redeemer is mighty, who as a Prince hath power with God, and will obtain help from him for us, by the power of his undeniable intercession; and as a glorious Conqueror commands the earth and hell itself. So that his might will secure us here; this is our strong tower, in which we believe ourselves so safe, that upon the confidence thereof we pray for protection and defence, and that we may neither fear nor feel harm from any of our opposers; we desire this may be granted and decreed in heaven by the mighty interest of our Mediator there, and accomplished on earth by the invincible strength of the same Jesus here. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Collect for Peace.*

O God, who by thy constant power and providence, ART THE AUTHOR OF OUR safety, and the cause of our PEACE from without, the procurer of amity AND LOVER OF CONCORD within thy church and among thy people. Thou art the only true God, IN KNOWLEDGE OF WHOM STANDETH OUR chief happiness in ETERNAL LIFE, and our best means of coming safe thither: for thou art the best of all Masters, WHOSE SERVICE is safe and pleasant, because it is PERFECT FREEDOM from the slavery of Satan, and the fear of his instruments. Therefore, mighty Lord, be pleased to DEFEND US who fly to thy protection, and surrender up ourselves to thee, vowing we are and ever will be THY HUMBLE SERVANTS. O keep us safe in soul and body, if not from, yet however IN ALL ASSAULTS which are made upon us by the power, malice, or cunning OF OUR ENEMIES; let their attempts be so constantly frustrated, THAT WE, under the shadow of thy wings, courageously proceeding in our holy course, and SURELY TRUSTING IN THY DEFENCE while we are faithful  
 159 to thy service, MAY NOT SO much as FEAR THE POWER OR policy OF ANY ADVERSARIES, since we have so good grounds to hope thou wilt now and always hear us, through the in-

terest, and help us THROUGH THE MIGHT OF JESUS CHRIST thy dear Son, our LORD and only Saviour. AMEN.

*The Analysis of the Morning Collect for Grace.*

§. VII. In this Collect are four parts :	I. A confession of the attributes of God,			1. Love,.....		{ O Lord, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God,
				2. Power, and.....		
				3. Eternity: .....		
	II. An acknowledgment of his providence:.....			1. In general:.....		{ who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day; defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger;
	III. A petition for his grace,	1. To preserve us from evil,	3. In particular, from	1. Spiritual evil:....		
2. And temporal: ..						
2. To help us in doing good, that we may be		1. Directed by him:....		{ but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.		
	2. Accepted of him:....					
IV. The means to obtain it .....						

*A Practical Discourse on the Collect for Grace.*

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§. VIII. O LORD, OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD] Peace without grace is the nurse of vice, the sauce of dangerous pleasures: it occasions our forgetfulness of God that gave it, and becomes an undisturbed opportunity to prosecute and enjoy those lusts which it is apt to breed. So that we must not pray for peace alone, but joined with righteousness and grace; for these God hath united in scripture (Psalm lxxxv. 10. 2 Cor. i. 2.) and we must not separate them in our devotions. For which cause this Collect for grace follows that for peace. Grace alone can make peace true, beneficial, and lasting; and sin is the great *boutefeu*, and the greatest enemy to peace in the world: so that by reciting this Collect devoutly, we still improve our former request, and if we can obtain such grace as to make us just and cha-

ritable, meek and patient towards one another, this world will be the type of everlasting peace. We shall neither disquiet ourselves nor others, while our doings are directed by the wisdom, and agreeable to the will of the God of peace. Since therefore grace is so necessary for us, we must learn where to seek it; and its very name will lead<sup>q</sup> us to the free and inexhaustible fountain, whence it ever flows; even to God who gives to all men liberally, and upbraideth no man. The very heathens confessed it the gift of God<sup>r</sup>; and he will rejoice to hear such a request from an humble soul that is sensible of its own weakness, and desirous of his strength. He will be more ready to grant than you can be to ask<sup>s</sup>. Consider but the attributes the church hath prefixed to this prayer. Is not the Lord your *heavenly Father*? And shall not he pity and love you, and delight to do you good? Is he not *almighty*, and therefore able to relieve you? Is he not *everlasting*, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever? being all-sufficient and never to be drawn dry, though we come day by day unto him. We have no reason to doubt either his sufficiency, his might, or his mercy, and therefore no cause to fear but this petition shall prevail. We are on earth, but we have a *Father in heaven*; we are weak, but our Lord is almighty; our time is measured by days and nights, and we grow older every day, and must at length have our end; but we have a God that changeth not, but is the same *from everlasting to everlasting*, (Psalm cii. 25, 26, 27.) Let this cheer our hearts,

q Gratia est gratis data, non meritis operantis, sed miseratione donantis. Aug. Ep. 120.

r Ἀρετὴ ἂν εἴη, οὗτε φύσει, οὗτε διδακτὸν, ἀλλὰ θεία μοίρα παραγινόμενη. Plat. in Men. Nulla sine Deo mens bona. Seneca.

s Luke xi. 13. Ἀνταρκεῖς δὲ ὄν

(τὸ θεῖον) καὶ τελειὸν καὶ ἰσχυρόν, κατὰ μὲν τὴν τελειότητα τὰ ἀγαθὰ βούλεται, κατὰ δὲ τὴν αὐτάρκειαν ἔχει, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἰσχὺν δύναται· βουλόμενος δὲ καὶ ἔχων, καὶ δυνατός, κατὰ τὴν μὴ δῶ. Maxim. Tyrius in Dissert. 22.

and give wings to our petitions, and strength to our faith. Let us fly to him, and rest upon him, for we can never come to him for grace, but we are sure to find him furnished with it, and both able and ready to bestow it upon us.

§. IX. WHO HAST SAFELY BROUGHT US TO THE BEGINNING OF THIS DAY] The mercies of God are new every morning, and so ought our praises to be<sup>t</sup> offered still with a fresh devotion. To which purpose, being now come to the shore, it will be a pleasant and profitable prospect to look back on the great deep, the darkness of the night which we have passed; and now to remember that though we were folded in the arms of sleep, the brother of death, and were insensible of danger, and incapable of resistance; yet we have gone safe through those dismal shades, which are the image of hell, the emblem of death, the opportunity of mischief, and the most uncomfortable part of our lives. And though the heathens supposed the dominion of the night to belong to the infernal powers, yet we have found it is under the government of our heavenly Father, by whose gracious providence we have been kept therein (from the malice of Satan, and the designs of evil men) safe in soul and body. Yea, he hath made it a refreshment of our weariness, an allay of our care, and a renewing of our strength, so that perhaps we scarce apprehended the terrors or tediousness of it. And are we not unworthy to live another day, if all this will not fill our hearts and mouths with eucharist 161 and thankful acknowledgments to him that never slumbers nor sleeps; who hath so *safely brought us* to the morning light, and given us an earnest of our resurrection? And this sincere gratitude will be not only

<sup>t</sup> Lament. ii. 23. Psal. xcii. ut te oriens inveniat jam paratum. Ambr. in Psal. cxix.  
1, 2. Occurre ergo ad solis ortum,

the discharge of a duty to God, but an occasion of benefit to ourselves. For he that heartily praiseth God every morning for the renewed mercies it brings with it, may more cheerfully ask, and more reasonably expect, the continuance of the same providence in the day following. So that this sentence will not only be an act of praise, but an excellent motive to the next petition, and will give us cause to hope, that he who hath begun this good work will perfect it, and that he who brought us safely to the beginning, will preserve us graciously to the end of this day.

§. X. DEFEND US IN THE SAME BY THY MIGHTY POWER, AND GRANT THAT THIS DAY WE FALL INTO NO SIN, NEITHER RUN INTO ANY KIND OF DANGER] Our necessities do not end with the night, nor vanish with the darkness; but we need a mighty power to keep us in the day also. For our whole lives are an absolute dependence on his defence, without which we had not escaped the terrors of the last night, nor can we but by it be secured against the dangers of this day. The light perhaps may make us more confident, but we are often less safe; for in the day-time we have company to disturb us, business to ensnare us, occasions and opportunities to entice us; we have more temptations, and greater variety of accidents and occurrences; and yet commonly we are but slenderly guarded against all the mischiefs which we are exposed unto; but we had need buckle on our armour, and beware that haste or negligence do not thrust us into the battle naked, before we have put on those pieces of defence by prayer, which God hath provided for us. If we view the way in which we are to walk, we may discern so many pits digged and traps set for us, that we (who are by nature blind, and by custom careless) are never likely to escape them, unless we be guided by an all-seeing eye, and

guarded by an almighty power. Say therefore every morning most passionately, Lord! we shall either fall into the pits of temptation, which Satan hath cunningly covered over, or run into the traps of danger which are secretly laid for us on every side; so that if thy presence go not along with us, carry us not any further, (Exod. xxxiii. 15.) Let us not dare to rush into the midst of temptations, till we have earnestly begged wisdom to discover, courage to resist, and strength to overcome them; remembering that sin doth displease our God, destroy our hopes, disquiet our consciences, and lay us open to all mischiefs; even the least sin hath these malignant qualities in it, besides that it makes way for a greater. We must expect to be tempted, in privacy and in company, in our business and recreations, in our meat and drink, nay, our charity and devotions. But we must every morning pray, that we may not in lesser or greater instances consent to these evil motions, that we may not *fall into any sin* by compliance, nor lie in and under it by impenitence: and we may be assured God's grace is sufficient thus to *defend us*. Only let us beware we do not abuse this necessary petition, by seeking for companions in, and occasions of sin before night; for if we be not watchful to avoid evil, as well as earnest in calling for the divine aid, we do but mock the Deity whose help we call for, and our actions shew our petitions were but feigned. But, O, with what a serene mind and an active hope shall they perform their evening sacrifice, and lay themselves down to rest, whose conscience testifies they have as studiously avoided all wilful sin throughout the whole day, as they did seriously pray against it in the morning. And that we may do so, let us place sin before danger, both in our prayers and in our opinions; because that only harms the body, but

this hurts the soul. Let the order of this sentence teach us, that sin is the greatest evil in the world; and if it cannot be avoided but we must fall into one of these, we must choose danger rather than sin: for if by avoiding of iniquity we are cast upon the suffering any evil, or losing any good; in that case we must account reproach our honour, poverty our riches, and loss our truest gain, and we shall be eternally rewarded for it. This may be our case sometimes, but commonly  
162 the flying of sin doth not involve us in danger, but secure us from it; and wickedness is the highway to mischief. Drunkenness and lust, pride and malice, injustice and deceit, do naturally lead those who follow them, into many perils, and as well these as all other sins do cause God to take away his protecting hand from us, and then we are not many steps from ruin, although his justice should not inflict any positive evils for these offences: and therefore if we would be safe, we must be holy. We are apt to be more sensible and fearful of sickness than sin, of the danger to our outward, rather than to our inward man; but since they are productive of one another, we must pray against both. And if we fear diseases or want, reproach or wrong, violence or death, let those very fears quicken our petitions against sin, which is the gate that lets them all in upon us. We may fall into calamities by the immediate hand of Providence, but when by acts of wickedness we bring them upon ourselves, we are said to *run into danger*; and this we chiefly pray against here, that we may not by our own folly and iniquity become accessory to our own misery; for such afflictions will not be so likely to be sanctified, so easy to be borne, nor so possible to be removed. If we lead holy lives, though the condition of our nature make us liable to more dangers than can easily be recounted, we

shall either escape them, or receive no considerable prejudice by them. And therefore, when a good man beholds his body liable to wounds, maims, and diseases; his mind to the impairing of any or all its faculties; his estate to losses, wrongs, and injuries; his whole life exposed to all the misery that can come upon him, by the unkindness or loss of friends, the malice of enemies, or the more public disturbances to church or state;—all these do only teach him to walk more humbly with God, and pray every day more heartily to him to deliver him from them; and to be more thankful, if by the divine mercy he do escape them.

§. XI. BUT THAT ALL OUR DOINGS MAY BE ORDERED BY THY GOVERNANCE, TO DO ALWAYS THAT WHICH IS RIGHTEOUS IN THY SIGHT, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN] If by all that hath been said, and our own sad experience, we are become so wise as to see we are insufficient for our own conduct; I hope we shall in this petition most humbly *commit our ways to the Lord, that he may direct our paths*, and that he may (as David speaks<sup>a</sup> Psalm xxxvii.) order all our goings and make them acceptable to himself, and then they shall be prosperous. If his good Spirit be our guide<sup>x</sup>, we shall seldom fall into danger, never into sin. O let us earnestly beseech him, that his grace may direct our hearts, and his providence order our lives, that we may be blest in our going out and coming in, in our studies and labours, commerce and society, eating and recreations, in our prayers and praises; that in all our actions, natural, civil, and religious, we may design his glory, and be successful. The proud man thinks his doings

<sup>a</sup> Prov. iii. 6. Psal. xxxvii. 5  
et 23. Ideo Deus secundet ac  
bene fortunet omnes eventus in  
cursu vitæ nostræ, nempe quia

nihil tentamus quod non ei pla-  
ceat. Calv. in loc.

<sup>x</sup> Psal. li. 12. Πνεῦμα ἡγεμο-  
νικόν.



good enough if they are *pleasing in his own sight*<sup>y</sup>; but alas! evil ways do frequently appear fair to us, and so we deceive ourselves into an unexpected ruin by absolving ourselves even when God condemns us. The hypocrite believes his actions excellent, if the world commend them; if the complying and fashionable out-sides of religion present him righteous in the eyes of men, he supposes his ways prudently ordered. But we must remember we are not judges of our own, nor of one another's works; but *must all stand before the judgment seat of God*; wherefore it is his approbation that we desire. It is not the opinion of the malefactor, nor the vote of his fellow-prisoners, but the sentence of the judge that must save or condemn. Having therefore such a tribunal to appear before, let us beg large measures of God's grace to lead us; for he will approve of no ways, but what his Spirit directs us into, and that had need be excellent indeed, that appears so to an all-seeing eye. Our lives must not be guided by the loose rules of custom, if we expect they should be accounted *righteous in his sight*. But they must be ordered by the exact rule of his holy word; and then though all the world condemn us, we shall be prosperous here, and finally acquitted hereafter. Perhaps we judge it impossible our ways should ever appear  
 163 *righteous in his sight*, but we are mistaken; for if we take him for our Guide, he will not be strict to mark unavoidable defects. And it is not our performance, but the effects of his own grace that he approves of. Nor yet doth he count them righteous for any merit that is in the works, or in the persons doing them, but through the merits and obedience of the holy Jesus, in whose name we therefore make this prayer, not ex-

<sup>y</sup> Prov. xvi. 2. et xxi. 2. Prov. xiv. 12. Quicquid volunt homines, se bene velle putant.

pecting our supplications can be heard, or our actions justified for their own worth, but *through Jesus Christ our Lord*; desiring he will please by his intercession and merits, so to recommend our actions and devotions, that we may be accepted by his grace, justified by his mercy, and finally may be for ever glorified with him and for his sake. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Collect for Grace.*

O LORD, we thy poor finite creatures upon this earth do daily remember with much comfort, that thou art OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, and hast pity on us, and being an ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD art all-sufficient and always able to help us. The remembrance of the dangers of the last night doth engage us most heartily to praise thee WHO HAST SAFELY kept our souls and bodies therein, and BROUGHT US entire in both TO THE BEGINNING OF THIS DAY. And this thy providence doth encourage us to beseech thee graciously to DEFEND us from all kinds of evil which this day's occasions may expose us to; and to keep us IN THE SAME BY THY MIGHTY POWER, which alone can make us safe. Consider our frailty, O Lord, AND GRANT, THAT THIS DAY we may discover and overcome all the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Devil; so that WE FALL INTO NO SIN. Let us not by any iniquity, great or small, displease thee, hurt our souls, NOR RUN, by our own folly, INTO ANY KIND OF DANGER to harm our bodies; and that we may avoid all the mischiefs with which we are environed, we pray that we may not be left to ourselves, BUT THAT ALL OUR DOINGS and undertakings in spiritual or temporal concerns MAY BE this day and ever guided by thy Spirit, and ORDERED BY THY wise and faithful GOVERNANCE; for while we follow thy direction, thy grace will enable us TO DO ALWAYS that which is most profitable to us, and best pleasing to thee, even THAT WHICH IS (though imperfect in itself) accounted RIGHT-ROUS IN THY SIGHT, O most merciful Judge, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST his merits and intercession; for whose sake accept and hear us, for he is OUR LORD and only Saviour. AMEN.

## SECTION XXII.

OF THE TWO COLLECTS PECULIAR TO THE EVENING PRAYER.

§. I. WE have chosen this place to insert these parts of the evening service, because all the following Collects are the same in both parts of the day; and the hymns with these two prayers being all the difference, it is not necessary in our method to separate the offices; and this way, every thing comes in its proper place, only omitting what is peculiar to the other part of the day.

*The Analysis of the Second Collect for Peace in the Evening Prayer.*

§. II. In this Collect are three parts :	I. The person of whom we ask, who is	1. The beginner of all good: . . . . .	{	O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed ;
		2. The perfecter of it: . .		
	II. The thing asked for, described by	1. Its name: . . . . .	{	give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give ;
		2. Its quality: . . . . .		
	III. The arguments to prevail for it, taken from	1. The benefit of the petitioners, as a means of our	1. Holiness: {	that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments ;
			2. Safety: {	and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies
			3. Comfort: {	may pass our time in rest and quietness ;
		2. The interest of the Mediator: . . . . .		through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

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§. III. O GOD, FROM WHOM ALL HOLY DESIRES, ALL GOOD COUNSELS, AND ALL JUST WORKS DO PROCEED] This Collect hath the same title, and seems to have the same subject with that in the morning-office. And indeed peace is so desirable a blessing, that we cannot pray for it too often, especially for different kinds of peace, as it is in the present case, if we well observe it.

In the morning we pray for external, in the evening for internal peace. In the beginning of the day, being to dispatch various affairs and converse with the world, we desire to be preserved from the injuries, affronts, and designs of evil men. In the close thereof we request that tranquillity of mind that springs from the testimony of a good conscience, that when our hearts lie as easy as our heads, our sleep may be sweet and quiet. The first kind of peace sometimes the best of men cannot obtain, for the wicked will do wickedly; but even then this inward peace will support them, and make a calm within, when the waves beat most furiously from without. So that this is the most necessary and most advantageous. Wherefore we are taught to ask this (which is called *the peace of God*) from the *God of peace*, who is here described to us as the author and finisher of all holiness and righteousness, which are the surest and only foundations for a true and lasting peace. From which we may learn, that there is an inseparable union between righteousness and true peace<sup>a</sup>, and that we cannot have this peace, unless it spring from *holy desires, good counsels, and just works*. If the grace of God work these in us, it is not all the slanders<sup>b</sup>, the scorn nor injustice of the world can hinder the serene reflections and inward peace of a good conscience. He that doth not deserve reproach can nobly despise it; and he that hath not provoked his neighbour to wrong him by any evil doing, can easily bear the greatest of injuries. Whereas if all the world be quiet, and none disturb the wicked man, he

<sup>a</sup> Fac justitiam et habebis pacem; tu forte unam habere vis, alteram non vis,—ut osculantur hæ, amant hæ; si amicam pacis non amaveris, non amabit te pax. August. Psal.

lxxxv. 10.

<sup>b</sup> Conscia mens recti, famæ mendacia ridet. Ovid. Bona vita gaudium semper habet. Isid. Soliloq.

makes himself restless<sup>c</sup>, because there is an enemy within, that upbraids him more loudly, and wounds him more deeply, than he can do the holy man. Whoever therefore inquires for true peace, let them here behold him, in and from whom are all the causes of it, with love and admiration. And let them acknowledge to his glory and their own comfort, that he is the author and finisher of every good work<sup>d</sup>. He excites our affections to desire that which is good, engageth our will to choose it, and strengtheneth our hands to perform it. There are no holy thoughts in our minds<sup>e</sup>, nor good purposes in our hearts<sup>f</sup>, nor any righteous actions in our lives<sup>g</sup>, but it is in, and by, and through him. To him then let us make our supplications, that he will fill our hearts with the motions of his Holy Spirit, the first seeds of all virtue; and by the continuing influence of the same grace make these holy desires spring up into prudent and religious counsels and determinations; and by favourable circumstances and addition of strength ripen them into pious and just works; and the fruit hereof will be peace. We may cheerfully hope and pray, that he that planted the root and sowed the seed will give us the pleasure of the fruit and comfort of the harvest, and let us beware, since we confess this to be the fruit of righteousness, that when we seem most earnest in our prayers for this peace, we do not wilfully deprive ourselves of it, and hinder our own wishes, by stifling holy thoughts, and breaking pious resolutions, and neglecting good

<sup>c</sup> Si in mundo non est quod timeant, pacem habere putantur; sed pax ista cum conscientia semper litigat, rixatur intrinsecus, et cum hostem non habet, secum decertat. Cassiod. in Psal.

<sup>d</sup> James i. 17. Phil. ii. 13. Et

γὰρ καὶ ἐφ' ἡμῶν αἴρησις τῶν καλῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῶν θεόθεν ἔχοντες, τῆς παρ' ἐκείνου συνεργίας καὶ τελειώσεως. Hierocles.

<sup>e</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 5.

<sup>f</sup> Prov. xvi. 1.

<sup>g</sup> Isai. xxvi. 12.

works. For he that cuts the root and lops off the branches must not expect ever to eat of this fruit; and if he complains, deserves to be silenced as the author of his own misery.

§. IV. GIVE UNTO THY SERVANTS THAT PEACE WHICH 166  
THE WORLD CANNOT GIVE] To ask a thing inconsiderable of a mighty prince may seem a disparagement, because he can as easily bestow a province on a faithful servant, as another can give a small gratuity. So when we that are the servants of the Most High make our petitions, it must be for such things as are not in our power, nor in the power of any other to bestow. Our requests must be proportionable to his infinite bounty rather than our deserts. We must ask something which may become his Majesty to give, that our Lord may be glorified by the very expectations of his servants. We now desire peace, but it is such a peace as no other hand can dispense; a peace that is *not given as the world gives*, in a feigned compliment or an empty wish at best<sup>h</sup>, but in sincerity and with effect; a peace differing from the world's peace in its nature, causes and qualities, in all which it far excels it. This peace is grounded on the evidence of faith in that reconciliation which the merits of Jesus have procured (Rom. v. 1, 2.) between the Divine Majesty and our sinful souls; from the persuasion whereof ariseth such clear hopes of pardon, such a lively sense of God's love, with such abundant satisfaction therein, and such fixed expectations of eternal glory thereby, that no ravishments are comparable to the pleasures of it. And then it is further confirmed by the testimony of a good conscience, (2 Cor. i. 12.) declaring we have endea-

<sup>h</sup> John xiv. 27. Homines ple-  
rumque frigida tantum cere-  
monia causa pacem in ore habent;

vel si pacem alicui serio pre-  
cantur, non tamen eam reipsa  
dare possunt. Calvin. in locum.

voured to walk answerable to this infinite love, by a strict observance of all the will of God; which occasions such a pleasing calm in our souls, and creates so brisk a delight in every review, that no tongue can tell the joy of such souls, but only theirs that feel it. This is the peace which is so sweet and so unmixed, so charming and powerful, that no sinful pleasures can entice, nor no earthly calamities force, a holy man from the embraces of it. The peace of the world, if it spring from the friendship and love of men, hath innumerable allays. For this is sometimes no more but gilded flattery, and a cover for more unexpected and dangerous assaults. But if true, it can neither support you under nor secure you against the anger of God, and must die when the first of the two lovers descends to the grave. If it arise from plenty, it will make your delights wormwood, to remember how quickly you may be stript of them, what excellent things you have given for them, and how speedily you must be taken from them; however, your peace and plenty must expire together. Give us then, O Lord, that peace which is grounded on thy truth and the merits of Jesus, upon a sense of thy love and an experience of thy grace; for this can never deceive nor fail us, because it ends in everlasting peace. And let us not seek this in the friendships of the wicked, nor the storehouses of pleasure; but in Jesus and a holy life, in heavenly desires, pious resolutions, and religious conversation. In which the grace of God will help us, for we are his servants, and make our applications to him for it; and since we seek not as the world seeks, no doubt we shall find a peace so sweet and ravishing, that nothing which the men of this world know can be compared to it.

§. V. THAT BOTH OUR HEARTS MAY BE SET TO OBEY

THY COMMANDMENTS] The epicure desires peace that he may wallow in sinful pleasures; but our first and principal end in this petition is, that we may have no interruption to our holiness; because our chief desire is to keep God's commandments<sup>i</sup>. And how pleasant will this sound in the ears of him who is the fountain of all *holy desires, good counsels, and just works*; when we wish peace itself only as a means to righteousness! I have observed before, that peace first springs from a holy life, and now must add, that it increases that holiness, to which it owes its original, by a reciprocal gratitude. The fear of God's irrevocable displeasure and the accusations of conscience may discourage, and persuade us we cannot safely undertake nor hope to finish a course of piety. And for want of this peace our good desires seldom come so far as religious resolutions, seldomer to be righteous actions; but this peace will be as a guard<sup>k</sup> to exclude all such fears; it will keep us firm in our allegiance to God, and make us abound in hope and constancy to the end. For by this peace we taste the sweetness of religion, the winning and yet 167 solid delights it doth afford. And hence it comes to be so far esteemed above all other things, that nothing can be able to separate us from the love of God<sup>l</sup>. Thus his favour becomes our joy, his Spirit our comforter, his grace our help, and his glory our reward. And would any reject these privileges and cast away these advantages for honour, pleasures, profit or friends? break his league with heaven to make such friendships? Can any man that ever tasted the living waters

<sup>i</sup> De pace temporis, per pacem pectoris, transeamus ad pacem æternitatis. Durand. lib. 4. cap. 39.

<sup>k</sup> Phil. iv. 7. Græc. *φρουρήσει*, præsidio erit cordibus vestris. See Rom. xv. 13.

<sup>l</sup> Qui in malis fuerit et conversus est ad bonum, dum gaudet de bonis quæ invenit et recordatur malorum quæ evasit, difficulter redit ad malum. Opus imperfect. in Matth. apud S. Chrysost. Hom. 2. cap. 2.



of the divine grace, long for the corrupt and standing pool of any sublunary contents? If we desire our hearts should be so fixed, let us beg an experience of this peace. Nothing draws us more powerfully, ties us more closely, nor keeps us constant more surely than this. For thus we shall learn to love holiness itself, and to welcome all good motions, and diligently to improve them till they bring forth their desired fruit.

§. VI. AND ALSO THAT BY THEE WE BEING DEFENDED FROM THE FEAR OF OUR ENEMIES MAY PASS OUR TIME IN REST AND QUIETNESS; THROUGH THE MERITS OF JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR. AMEN] The sum of our happiness on earth is to *lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*; and if we can obtain the peace of God, we may be happy in both these. And since our heavenly Master not only delights in the holiness, but *hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants*; we use it as an argument to move him to grant us this peace, by representing that it will complete our felicity; for it will fix our hearts in the obedience of his laws, and will make our lives most comfortable. He must be highly base that will injure and offend an innocent and blameless man, a friend of Heaven, who deserves and gains the affections of most men<sup>m</sup>. Yet if such an one be injured, he is sure of the aid of an almighty Defender, and his own heart being filled with the peace of God, he enjoys tranquillity in his own breast, and is not to be constrained by violence from without, nor cannot be terrified by any fears within; for since his care is to please God, he daily experiences that Heaven's eye is over him, and is more and more confirmed that his foundation is sure. And thus be it night or day, he can pass it over with all inward quietness, so that nothing in this world

<sup>m</sup> Qui infra diligitur, idem et Sat fautores semper habet qui supra diligitur. R. Mos. Æg. recte facit. Seneca.

can make such an one miserable. Let us be earnest then with the Author of all holiness, to give us that peace which may be the nurse and guard of our piety, the support and comfort of our lives, that our days may be safe and our nights pleasant, and every moment engage us to new acts of praise. And let us beg this peace for the merits' sake of Jesus, who hath purchased a covenant of peace with his precious blood, remembering we deserve by our sins to live in perpetual disturbance; but for his sake we may hope for peace, and desire it as the readiest way to temporal, yea, and to eternal happiness. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Collect for Peace in the Evening Prayer.*

O GOD, the giver of every good and perfect gift, FROM WHOM and by whose grace ALL HOLY DESIRES first spring up in our hearts, and ALL GOOD COUNSELS and holy resolutions grow, till they bring forth the fruit of righteous actions AND ALL JUST WORKS, all these, with that true peace which flows from them, DO PROCEED from thee. Wherefore, gracious Lord, GIVE UNTO us that acknowledge ourselves THY SERVANTS such firm persuasions of our reconciliation to thee, and such comfortable testimonies of our obedience to thy will, that we may ever enjoy THAT PEACE WHICH is so sweet and sure, that THE WORLD, with all its friendship and plenty, CANNOT GIVE any peace worthy to be compared with it. Grant us so to taste this delicious fruit of a holy life, THAT BOTH OUR wavering and inconstant HEARTS, by the experience of this peace, MAY BE SET firmly and resolved steadfastly TO OBEY THY COMMANDMENTS to the increase of our piety; AND ALSO THAT BY THEE and thy gracious providence WE, BEING DEFENDED from the power and malice, and preserved in safety FROM THE FEAR OF OUR ENEMIES, may never be hurt, terrified, or disturbed; 168 but MAY PASS OUR TIME which thou shalt afford us on this earth IN REST from our foes, AND QUIETNESS in our own minds. Grant us, O Lord, therefore this peace, for the sake, as it was obtained THROUGH THE MERITS, of thy Son JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR. AMEN.

*The Analysis of the Evening Collect for Aid against all Perils.*

§. VII. This Collect hath only two parts :	I. The peti- tions :	1. Mystically, for	Knowledge . . . . .	{	<i>Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord ;</i>
			Comfort : . . . . .		
		2. Literally, for safety ; inti- mating	1. The means by which we must be deli- vered : . . . . .	{	<i>and by thy great mercy defend us</i>
			2. The evils from which : . . . . .		
			3. The time in which : . . . . .		
	II. The motive urged to obtain them : . . . . .			{	<i>for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.</i>

*A Practical Discourse on the Evening Collect for Safety.*

§. VIII. LIGHTEN OUR DARKNESS, WE BESEECH THEE, O LORD] The declining of the day doth now mind us of the approaching darkness, which will shortly wrap us in the shadows of the night. What petition more seasonable therefore, than with holy David to beseech God to *enlighten our darkness*<sup>a</sup> ! For the night is sad and terrible ; in it we can see nothing with our bodily eyes to entertain or to cheer us ; and we seem exposed to all the mischiefs<sup>b</sup> of Satan, and those instruments of his who fly the light, and hope to cover their sin with this sable mantle. Our dangers are many, and our fears are sometimes more, especially if our eyes be closed by unbelief as well as darkness. If we behold not the Divine Providence watching over us, and the angels encamping round about us, the very apprehension of the perils of a dismal night may damp our joy, and startle our courage, and make us cry out with the prophet's servant, *What shall we do*<sup>c</sup> ? But let us entreat the Lord to fulfil his promise, that *light may arise in our darkness*<sup>d</sup>, that is (in scripture phrase),

<sup>a</sup> Psal. xviii. 28. Vulg. Deus meus illumina tenebras meas.

<sup>b</sup> Versuta fraus et callida amat tenebris obtegi. Prud. et Ovid. Met. 2.—Conscia culpæ, Conspectum lucemque fugit tene-

brisque pudorem Celat.—John iii. 20. Job xxiv. 17.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Kings vi. 15, 16, 17.

<sup>d</sup> Psal. cxii. 4. Χαρά φῶς λέγεται, ἡ λύπη σκότος. Eccl. v. 17. Psal. xcvi. 11, &c. Adrian. Isag.

*comfort* in our sadness; that our hearts may (by faith and cheerful thoughts, by the assurance of his providence, and the operations of his grace) be joyful and pleasant; and that the shine of his countenance may make our nights bright as the day illuminated by the meridian sun. For the inward comforts of God's Spirit, and a sense of his care and favour, when the soul is in fear or sadness, do cheer and refresh more than a sudden light doth the wandering traveller in a gloomy 169 night. These make our dwellings a Goshen, while the wicked have thoughts black and dismal; Egypt is veiled in a horrid shade, and terrified with the dark side of the cloud, while the people of God *are led all the night through with a light of fire*; so that the darkness and light to them are equally safe and comfortable. Or if we desire to spiritualize the petition more, we may take occasion from the approaching night, to enlarge our meditations upon our spiritual ignorance and blindness by nature, by which our souls are veiled and in the dark, so that we often wander out of the way. We stumble in the day, and are in danger to run into the shadow of death, till *the day-spring from on high* visit us, and give us that true knowledge which is usually set out under the name of *light*<sup>e</sup>. Wherefore let us humbly beseech our gracious Lord to let the Sun of Righteousness arise upon us, for whoever follows him doth not wander nor *walk in darkness*, (John viii. 12.) and that we may *take heed to God's holy word as to a light shining in a dark place*, (2 Pet. i. 19.) and a sure guide to true blessedness. And then our knowledge shall increase, and we shall keep the right path till we arrive to that eternal light which shall never be extinguished. When our hearts are clouded with grief, shadowed with ignorance, and be-

<sup>e</sup> Luke ii. 32. Heb. vi. 4. Illuminati, i. e. edocti.

numbed with dreadful apprehensions, we are taught to lift up our thoughts to the Father of lights, and the God of all comfort, who dwells in that light to which no mortal eye can approach, whose countenance is clear as the sun and bright as lightning. And if we can by our beseechings obtain his favour to shine upon us, no doubt it will turn our night into day, our sorrows into the joys of the morning. While we are in the darksome cell of this lower world, we think of our glorified brethren who dwell in a perpetual brightness and everlasting light, and we long to be with them when it may please God. But in the mean time we hope he will support and recreate us with some glimpses of those beams, of which they have the constant and full fruition.

§. IX. AND BY THY GREAT MERCY DEFEND US FROM ALL PERILS AND DANGERS OF THIS NIGHT] Comfort and safety are those two things which make a happy night. And of whom should we ask these, but of *God the Lord, who is a light and defence*, (Psalm lxxxiv. 11.) The hopes of his love make it comfortable; but lest we should be deceived in those hopes, we pray also, that his mercy and power may keep us safe. We may easily perceive we are most miserable without his providence, especially in the night-season; for then Satan prepares most violently to assault us, supposing *it is his hour and the power of darkness*. And alas! how easily may we then be enticed with pleasure, transported with malice and revenge, or disturbed with evil fancies or imaginations, when the soul is heavy, the senses dull, the stomach loaden, the flesh strong, and the reason weak<sup>f</sup>! when the curtain is drawn, and we

<sup>f</sup> Stomachus æger, mens somnolenta, animus occupatus—tunc omne nefas suadere contendunt, quando nullus arbiter culpæ,

nullus criminis conscius, nullus potest esse erroris testis. Ambr. in Psal. cxix. part. 8.

think no eyes see us, neither judge, witness, nor accuser can espy us, how open are our souls then to all dangerous temptations! And yet our temporal concerns are not more safe; for how soon may we be seized by diseases or sudden death, or made miserable by thieves and robbers, burnings or inundations! Are not our lives and limbs, estates and friends, liable to loss and mischief both suddenly and unavoidably? Go we then with all speed to our merciful Father, and let us represent our condition to him; the consideration whereof will both humble us, and make our requests more zealous, and mollify him and make him more ready to grant them. He will be moved to compassion, to see us chained by night and sleep, helpless and exposed to all mischiefs of soul and body, and will send his grace to defend our souls, and his angels to guard our bodies that none of these perils shall hurt us: and then our morning praises must own it as an act of his great pity. How dare you suffer your eyes to sleep in the midst of such armies of perils, before you have besought him that *never slumbers nor sleeps* to save you from them? But if any be confident without prayer, it is not courage, but desperate stupidity and inconsideration that makes him so daring. The good man begs protection for this night, and so again for the next, and every time with a new devotion, having warmed his heart first with apprehensions of his own dangers and his insufficiency to escape them.

§. X. FOR THE LOVE OF THINE ONLY SON, OUR SAVIOUR, 170  
JESUS CHRIST. AMEN] Although with the disciples we may be somewhat afraid when we enter into the cloud, yet we must beware the darkness do not shut up the eye of our faith, by which we may behold him in whom God is well pleased, when our bodily eyes are closed. And if we discern him by faith, that very sight will

*make our darkness to be light.* For we may run to him, and approach the throne of grace with him in our arms. The Molossian king was by law obliged to grant any petition offered by one that brought his son with him. And the King of heaven cannot deny us, when we most truly and humbly disclaim our own merits, and beg his protection *for the love he bears* to the holy Jesus, who was the delight of his soul from all eternity, and yet he became one with us in his incarnation, and made us one with him in our regeneration; and we are the members of his body, and the price of his blood: so that the Father loves us in and for him, that have nothing attractive or lovely in ourselves. Again, we entreat him to save us *by all the love* which Jesus bears unto us, to whom we are near as his own flesh, dearer than his own life, more esteemed than fallen angels, or a thousand worlds; for *his delight is with the sons of men*, Prov. viii. 31. Wherefore we beseech our heavenly Father by that which will move his bowels towards us, by his own everlasting love to us, and his affection to his only Son, and by the inexpressible love of that his Son to us, to give us a night comfortable and safe. We are in darkness, but our Head is in a never-ceasing light, and he that gave him to redeem us from eternal darkness will not suffer us to perish in spiritual darkness, nor leave us exposed to the mischiefs of one night, that will so soon be overpast. If our affections be as fervent as this argument is forcible, it is sure this petition will not be denied.

*The Paraphrase of the third Collect for Aid against all Perils.*

Let the assurance of thy providence, the comforts of thy grace, and the beams of thy favour LIGHTEN OUR DARKNESS, and remove the discomfort of the approaching night; WE BESEECH THEE to make it sweet and safe to us, O LORD, thou Father of lights; AND BY THY GREAT MERCY behold and pity

the various miseries and mischiefs that we thy poor helpless creatures are exposed unto; that thou mayest preserve and DEFEND US in our souls and bodies, estate and friends, FROM ALL PERILS AND DANGERS which might befall us in any part OF THIS NIGHT. Grant this, dear Father, (not for our merits, but) FOR THE LOVE thou bearest to the person OF THY ONLY SON, and to us for his sake, since he is OUR SAVIOUR, even JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD and our Redeemer. AMEN.

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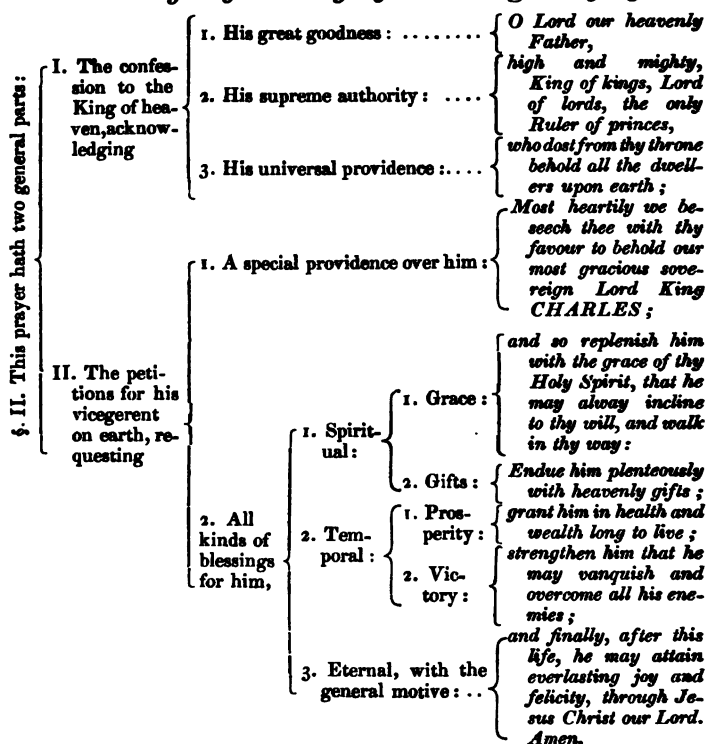
## SECTION XXIII.

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OF THE COLLECTS FOR THE KING AND THE ROYAL FAMILY.

§. I. THE church of England is famous above all other churches for her entire loyalty to the king; which may be seen not only in the lives of the true sons thereof, but in these prayers which are prescribed to be daily made therein for his majesty's welfare, which no offices in the world can parallel. And that we may repeat them with hearts full of loyalty and true devotion, we will more particularly explain them in our usual method.



*The Analysis of the Prayer for the King's Majesty.*172 *A Practical Discourse on the Prayer for the King's Majesty.*

§. III. O LORD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER] The almighty and eternal God is (without dispute) the King of heaven and earth, and supreme Governor of all the world. But since his throne is in heaven, he is pleased to constitute princes his deputies on the earth, which he hath given to the children of men<sup>a</sup>. Wherefore since *by him kings reign*<sup>b</sup>, we submit to his appointment of them, and revere his majesty in them, and to

<sup>a</sup> Psal. cxv. 16.<sup>b</sup> Prov. viii. 15. Nos judicium Dei suscipimus in imperatoribus, qui gentibus illos præfecit ; id in

eis scimus esse quod Deus voluit, ideoque et saluum volumus esse quod Deus voluit. Tertull. Apol. cap. 32.

him we make our supplications for them, who hath power to defend them, as well as authority to create them. And he must needs have a peculiar regard toward them and love to them, because they are anointed by him to administer his rights among us. This hath encouraged all nations to pray for their governors so universally, as if it had been an agreement among all mankind. To omit the heathen's sacrifices and prayers for their kings and emperors, we shall find two Psalms<sup>c</sup> which were used by the Jews as forms of prayer for the king. And both by God's command and the desire of the Persian emperors, (who then were rulers over that people,) supplications were made to God in their behalf<sup>d</sup> by those Jews who were under their protection. But to come nearer; we Christians are most expressly commanded by God and his holy apostle<sup>e</sup>, *to pray for kings and all in authority*: so that it was ever a part of the church's public devotions, to intercede for the emperors and princes, even while they were enemies to the faith, as all antiquity doth evince: much more when the powers of the world became Christian; for then they named them in their offices with titles expressing the dearest affection and most honourable respect. And surely since we meet in public to pray especially for public mercies, there is not any temporal blessing that is of so universal concern, as that we should have righteous and religious kings, guided by wise counsels, and living in prosperity and peace. For

<sup>c</sup> Psal. xx. et lxxii.

<sup>d</sup> Ezra vi. 10. Jerem. xxix. 7.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. In obsequio quotidiano—et pro regibus et pro his qui in sublimitate positi sunt orandum est. Chrys. in Tim. ii. Pro potestatibus seculi. Tertull. Apol. Obsecramus Deum pro tranquillitate mundi, pro

regibus. Cyril. Catech. 5. Pro fidelissimis et Deo dilectis imperatoribus. Liturg. Chrys. Memento, Domine, piissimi et fidelissimi imperatoris. Basil. in Liturg. Pro rege preces fiant. Concil. Berkhamsted. cap. 1. an. 697. Spelman.

this (as the apostle himself observes) is for every man's peace<sup>f</sup>. He bids them pray for heathen kings, since the government of a heathen or a tyrant is better than anarchy or confusion. And if the preservation of such were advantageous to Christianity, how much more then are we obliged to call upon our heavenly Father for the welfare of Christian kings, who are fathers of their country, and nursing fathers to the church<sup>g</sup>; who execute justice and defend religion, and do good to all quiet and peaceable men. Therefore we here call God *our heavenly Father* to signify, it will be a great demonstration of his love to us and care of us, if he please to preserve our prince whom he hath set over us.

§. IV. HIGH AND MIGHTY, KING OF KINGS, LORD OF LORDS, THE ONLY RULER OF PRINCES] We ought to beware that while we give Cæsar his due, we rob not God of his. The splendour of royal majesty might be apt to dazzle us, and make us imagine it had no superior, nor needed no supporter. To prevent which, the church hath selected out of holy writ those glorious attributes of God, which declare him to be *higher than the kings of the earth*, (Psalm lxxxix. 27.) We see every head uncovered before mortal princes, and every knee bending to them, which shews they are high in dignity; but there is one higher than they, (Eccles. v. 8.) who hath greater reverence paid him by angels, than these by their most dutiful subjects. If earthly kings be judged mighty in power, because of guards and revenues, their forts and armies; then who can estimate his power and might, against whom such preparations are nothing, since he speaks in thunder, and can arm all  
173 the hosts of heaven, nay, the meanest creatures upon

<sup>f</sup> Illorum namque salus est nostra tranquillitas. Theophil. in  
1 Tim. ii. Ostendit in nostrum  
lucrum cadere ipsorum incolu-  
mitatem. Cæcum. in locum.  
<sup>g</sup> Numb. xi. 12. Isai. xlix. 23.

earth, to destroy the highest and mightiest of the sons of men? Yet if kings and their people do confess, with holy David, that he is the Most High, and to be feared, (Psalm xlvii. 2.) his might shall be the support of their dignity and their power, which is assuredly the wisest course; for they can never be higher than when they submit to the Most High, nor stronger than when they trust in the Almighty. He who is not only above them, as being higher in dignity and greater in power, but supreme over them, a *King of kings and Lord of lords*<sup>h</sup>, who hath not only some petty-princes of a few provinces his homagers, (which is all that the greatest empires in the world can boast of,) but all mortal princes are his vicegerents, since he hath and ever had the absolute disposal of all the kingdoms upon earth, setting up one and pulling down another, as it pleaseth him. It may be accounted dishonour to a prince to crave aid of his equal; but let not the greatest monarch blush to bend his knee to the Supreme Majesty of heaven, whose vassals and homagers are all the governors of this lower world, who wear their crowns by his donation, and must resign them at his command. How can kings or subjects want relief, that humbly and earnestly sue to this *blessed only potentate, the King of kings*? If we, that are by the supreme Disposer of all things placed under authority, want any thing in or for our governors, let us apply ourselves to him who is *the only Ruler of princes*, and hath the hearts of kings in his hands, (Prov. xxi. 1.) he can persuade, convince, and turn them, when they will not take advice from their inferiors. And he only is the Judge of their actions, since they are his servants and substitutes, to their own Master they must stand or fall, and are only accountable at his tribunal<sup>i</sup>. And therefore we have

<sup>h</sup> Dan. ii. 47. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

<sup>i</sup> Θεὸς μόνος κρίνει δύνανται. Xiphii. *Περὶ γὰρ τοῦ τῆς ἀυταρκειᾶς ὁ* lin. Vide Psal. li. 4. Neque

so much the more need to pray for them to their great Lord, that he would direct them to do well, and guide them who are to rule us; that this their mighty power may be our safety and our peace; for if it should be otherwise (which God forbid) we neither will nor can oppose them, having no other arms against our prince but prayers and tears<sup>k</sup>. But why should we doubt, since we pray to him that can overrule the greatest kings, and will not suffer this, unless it be as a just punishment to our iniquities? Finally, let all this create in every soul a most honourable opinion of this great God, and fill every heart with reverence that is before him, when we see our dread sovereign, and all the mighty monarchs of the Christian world, doing obeisance to his footstool, and laying down their crowns at his feet, acknowledging they received their dominions from him, and hold them by his favour; and declaring they trust not in the multitude of their people, strength of their cities, nor prudence of their councils; but though they have armies and navies terrible and numerous, and revenues unaccountable, they come to the throne of our God to petition for his help, and all their faithful subjects attend on them and join with them. Who then would not fear before him, and trust in him; express all possible lowliness in his presence, and give him all imaginable glory, who liveth and reigneth over all from the beginning, and shall do so for ever and ever?

§. V. WHO DOST FROM THY THRONE BEHOLD ALL THE DWELLERS UPON EARTH] It is an infallible maxim,

enim ullis ad pœnam vocantur legibus, tuti imperii potestate, homini ergo non peccavit, cui non tenebatur obnoxius. Ambros. de loc. Nulla creatura judicat regem, sed solus Deus s. b.

Pirk. Aboth.

<sup>k</sup> Lacrymæ meæ arma mea sunt—aliter nec debeo nec possum resistere. Ambros. Orat. in Auxent.

that *the less is always blessed of the greater*, (Heb. vii. 7.) Wherefore being to beg a blessing from the King of heaven for the rulers of this world, we must first acknowledge they are inferior to him, in the extent of their dominion, as well as in the quality of their dignity, power, and authority. There is a providence in scripture attributed to governors<sup>1</sup>, who as they sit on their thrones above all their subjects, so that height is the emblem of the advantage they have to behold, and a monitor of the duty lying on them, to take care of all that are under their charge. But the most vigilant princes, with all their faithful ministers, (who are as so many eyes and ears to them,) find it difficult enough to oversee and provide for the inhabitants of one kingdom. Whereas the *King of kings* hath the *heaven for his throne and the earth for his footstool*<sup>m</sup>; and as he sits higher, so he sees farther than they. *From his throne he beholds all the world*; the meanest<sup>174</sup> are not below his cognizance, nor the greatest above his reach. He sees and rules all; which gave ground to that Egyptian hieroglyphic, which represented God by an eye in a sceptre, the emblems of providence and authority. And in the sacred pages the same thing is expressed by the phrase of *beholding from his throne*<sup>n</sup>. For the Divine Majesty is no idle spectator, but improves the height of his seat, and the universal prospect he hath from thence, to the good of all mankind. His eye denotes his care, for he sees the necessities<sup>o</sup>, and considers the wants and desires of all men, and of every particular, and orders his supplies accordingly. So that his providence and dominion is over all the

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxiv. 3. Græc. Διὰ τῆς  
σῆς προνοίας.

<sup>m</sup> Αὐτὸς δ' αὖθις ἐπ' οὐρανὸν  
ἐστήριξαί χροσίῳ ἐνὶ θρόνῳ, γαίῃ  
θ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶ βέβηκεν. Orpheus.

COMBER, VOL. I.

Isa. lxi. Psal. xcvi. 9.

<sup>n</sup> Psal. xxxiii. 14. Isa. lxiii.

14.

<sup>o</sup> Psal. xxxiv. 15. Gen. xxii.

14. Deus videbit, al. providebit.

B b

earth, and no monarch need account it a dishonour to bow before this mighty Lord and his glorious throne.

§. VI. MOST HEARTILY WE BESEECH THEE WITH THY FAVOUR TO BEHOLD OUR MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN LORD KING CHARLES] Since all mankind is under the eye and care of God, no doubt he hath an especial regard to kings and princes, on whose safety the welfare of all the rest (next under his own providence) doth depend<sup>p</sup>. He chiefly delights in men as they are united into societies by charity and laws; and for the preservation of these unions, his principal care is for those he hath set over them, who are the bond of the rest. We may therefore cheerfully pray for an especial and more particular providence over our gracious king, because God doth usually grant this, and because he needs it more than ordinary persons do. His duty is more difficult, his abundance exposeth him to more temptations, and his height to more dangers than any of his people; and yet his preservation is far more necessary and of universal concernment<sup>q</sup>, for he is worth ten thousand of us, and we had need pray heartily to God to save him who doth defend us all. He stands in need of more wisdom to direct him, more power to protect him, more care to preserve him, than other men; and therefore we pray that the King of heaven will shew a particular favour to him. A pious and religious king doth as earnestly seek and as much value a favourable look from the Majesty of heaven, as any of his courtiers do a smile from his countenance. *Lord, saith holy David<sup>r</sup>, look upon the face of thine anointed,*

<sup>p</sup> Nihil est illi principi Deo acceptius quam concilia cœtusque hominum, quæ civitates appellantur, earumque rectores et servatores hinc profecti huc revertuntur. Cicer. Somn. Scip.

<sup>q</sup> 2 Sam. xviii. 3. Ἀπερὴς πρῶ-

τον ἔργον σώζειν τὸν ἅπαντα ἄλλα σώζοντα. Plutarch. in Vit. Pelopid. Cum tot ab hac anima populorum vita salusque Pendeat—Lucan.

<sup>r</sup> Psal. lxxxiv. 9. et xxi. 6. et iv. 7, 8.

*and thou wilt make me glad with the joy of thy countenance, yea, more joyful than the worldling is in the increase of his admired wealth.* And methinks it should fill our souls with awful and noble thoughts of our glorious Lord God, to see kings, *in the light of whose countenance is life, and whose favour is as dew upon the grass,* (Prov. xix. 6. and xvi. 15.) courting so humbly, and needing so mightily the favour of the Majesty of heaven. Let us join our most hearty requests, that what our dear sovereign wants and wishes, he may have. If he were a Saul or a Nero, we should sin in ceasing to pray for him (1 Sam. xii. 23.); but no affections nor passions are too fervent, no opportunities too often, to call upon God for our gracious king, who is our lawful and natural liege lord, a just possessor of his crown, a worshipper of God, a defender of the faith, a maker of good laws, and an executor of the same; who secures our rights, protects us from public enemies and private frauds, and endeavours to choose fit and faithful governors both for church and state. For such an one we must pray, not only out of obedience to God and the church's order, but out of our private love and particular affection, as St. Ambrose<sup>s</sup> did for the emperor Gratian. To quicken us whereunto, we may do well to call to mind the miseries of the church of God under persecuting heathens of old, later furious Romanists, and the particular calamities of this church under the late usurpers; and then we shall discern what praise we owe to God, and what love to our gracious king, whose name ought to be so dear to us, that we should wish it written in heaven, and registered in the book of life, as well as in the leaves of the church's devotions.

<sup>s</sup> Meque non solum officio sed etiam amore privato. Ambros. Ep. ad Gratian.



175 §. VII. AND SO REPLENISH HIM WITH THE GRACE OF THY HOLY SPIRIT, THAT HE MAY ALWAYS INCLINE TO THY WILL, AND WALK IN THY WAY] Grace is so constant a companion and so certain an effect of the divine favour, that the Greek expresseth both by one word. So that if we can prevail with God to look favourably on our sovereign, we may be assured he will give bountifully to him. And since the first and choicest of his largesses is *the grace of his Holy Spirit*, we first beg that he may have a constant and bountiful supply of that, of which he needs a double portion. For the temptations of a prince are many, to pride and luxury, to carelessness and vanity; his faithful friends very few, who either will or dare inform or advise him without partiality and self-interest; his concerns are weighty, since the welfare of church and state depends upon them; his example prevalent, and usually made the encouragement of virtue or the excuse of vice. All which declares the danger of governors to be very great to fall into evil ways, and their preservation from them to be the greatest blessing; wherefore all faithful subjects and good men cease not to pray, that he who rules us may be governed by the will, and *walk in the ways of God*; and then judgment shall be executed, religion maintained, the nation shall remain in peace, and the church in prosperity, the kingdom established, the king and people exceeding happy in each other. Evil men (for their own designs) may advise their prince to attend nothing but the pursuing his own inclinations, and to walk in the ways of his own heart; but the church knows it is his happiness, honour, and interest, to will according to the will of God, and act according to his law, and therefore orders us to pray for such abundant measures of grace as may incline his heart and guide his life into all

the paths of true holiness; that his eminent dignity may make his virtue exemplary and conspicuous, and that may reflect again a lustre upon his honour, to make him still more glorious. And to encourage this petition, we may remember, it is desired in heaven as well as on earth, by him that can give, as well as by us that ask; for God himself enjoins the prince to have always beside him a copy of his law<sup>t</sup>, to read on it, meditate in it, ask counsel of it<sup>u</sup>, and walk according to it, that he might prosper all his days. And from thence came that ceremony (still in use) of delivering the word of God to the king at his coronation, (2 Kings xi. 12.) the substance whereof is fully expressed in this excellent sentence, which will most heartily be put up by all that desire the glory of God, the benefit of the prince, and the welfare of this nation.

§. VIII. ENDUE HIM PLENTEOUSLY WITH HEAVENLY GIFTS] In the first ages of the world there were usually many visible effects of the descent of the Holy Spirit<sup>x</sup> upon such as were chosen to govern the people of God, to beget in those under them a reverent opinion of these persons, whom all the world hath ever accounted sacred. And there are still some footsteps of these miraculous gifts in the power of healing, which God hath bestowed upon the lawful heir of this crown, as a testimony that our king is the Lord's anointed. To which gift we beseech our heavenly Father to add *the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might*; which are so necessary, that in our prayers as well as Solomon's choice<sup>y</sup> they have the precedence of all outward blessings. For these gifts will enable him

<sup>t</sup> Deut. xvii. 18. Josh. i. 8.

<sup>u</sup> Psal. cxix. 124. Heb. Viri consilii mei sunt.

<sup>x</sup> Num. xi. 17. Judges xiii. 25. 1 Sam. x. 10. et xvi. 13.

<sup>y</sup> 1 Kings iii. 9, 10, 11. ubi

Grotius ex Menand. Ἀρχὰν, στρατηγὸς, ἡγεμὼν δῆμου, πάλιν Σύμβουλος ὁ διαφέρων λογισμῷ πάντ' ἔχει.

to determine intricate cases, to manage weighty affairs, to countermine subtle devices, to disentangle cunningly proposed counsels, in which general usefulness and the adviser's self-interest are commonly closely twisted. Wherefore we pray that he may have so quick an apprehension, so sound a judgment, and so courageous a mind, that (like many of his royal progenitors) he may with a spirit almost prophetic, unriddle the dark intrigues of policy, and with an heroic resolution break through the most rugged difficulties; that he may neither fear his enemies, nor too much encourage any of his seeming friends; that he may neither be lifted up in prosperity, nor dejected by adversity, and may tread the narrow path between justice and clemency, severity and indulgence. And we are to hope that he who hath advanced our sovereign to this dignity will be mindful  
176 of the necessities of his own anointed, and fit him for the place he hath called him to; so that all his people may reverence and love him, and be happy under the government of so wise and religious a prince.

§. IX. GRANT HIM IN HEALTH AND WEALTH LONG TO LIVE] Though Solomon chose wisdom and grace, yet God added, beyond his promise, riches and honour, long life and health, as an accessory to the former<sup>z</sup>. Wherefore, according to our Saviour's rule, we pray for those in the first place; and now we hope our all-sufficient Lord, who hath endless treasures of all sorts, will not deny us these temporal blessings, which are requisite to his external felicity. And we have the primitive Christians<sup>a</sup> for our example, in this as well as in other

<sup>z</sup> 1 Kings iii. 11. Matt. vi. 33.

<sup>a</sup> Nos enim pro salute imperatoris Deum invocamus æternum. Et paulo post.—Oramus pro omnibus imperatoribus, vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum,

&c. et quæcunque hominis et Cæsaris vota sunt. Tertul. Apol. cap. 30. Sacrificamus pro salute imperatoris (sed Deo nostro et ipsius, sed quomodo præcepit Deus) pura prece. Idem ad Scapul. cap. 2.

things; who though they would offer no incense to false gods for the health and safety of the emperor, as the Gentiles did, yet did daily and earnestly sacrifice to the true God, with fervent prayers, beseeching him to give their princes health and wealth, long life and peace, and whatsoever Cæsar or any man could wish for or desire, as we learn out of Tertullian, and all the ancient Liturgies. But we must take these words in their full latitude, and so they will comprehend all outward blessings; so *health* signifies not only the good temperament of the body, but (as the Latin *salus*) safety from all dangers<sup>b</sup>. And *wealth* intimates not only riches, but all manner of plenty and prosperity<sup>c</sup>. And a *long life* is to be interpreted of a life of comfort and happiness; for the life of the miserable is almost a continual dying<sup>d</sup>. And now let us put all these together, and the sum will be, that we earnestly pray, that his majesty's life may be long, and his years many and prosperous; that he may be freed from sickness and want, that so his reign may abound with all blessings. Which we ought earnestly to desire for our own sakes, because it is our concern the supreme power should be always vigorous and safe, prosperous and abounding in all plenty, that he may be a terror to his enemies, and a defence to his loving and loyal subjects. In his safety we are safe, his health and wealth enable him to secure us in that which is ours; since his strength and his time, his treasures and his power, are employed and expended for the common good. And because changes are always dangerous, sometimes destructive to a nation, we pray that our king may be long preserved in his gracious reign over us. And no doubt his majesty

<sup>b</sup> Isai. lviii. 8.<sup>c</sup> Job xxi. 13. 1 Cor. x. 24.<sup>d</sup> Non vivere sed valere est

vita. Prov. Rab. Ita 1 Kings i. 31. Dan. i. 4.

shall fare the better for the fervent prayers of the church, which he hath so well deserved by being the restorer and defender of its ancient doctrine and discipline.

§. X. STRENGTHEN HIM THAT HE MAY VANQUISH AND OVERCOME ALL HIS ENEMIES] Guicciardine the famous historian tells us, that the constant opposition of the popes to the emperors had occasioned it to pass for a proverb, (*Proprium est ecclesia odisse Cæsares,*) that it was natural to the church to hate the emperor. Which how justly it is said of the Roman church, the world knows. But it is sure nothing is more contrary to the principles and practice of this our church, who may rejoice and glory in her fervent love of her gracious king, her devout prayers for him, and her constant loyalty to him and his royal progenitors. So that I hope it may be more justly said, that it is natural to the true sons of the church of England to love the king. Whoever loves the peace of the church doth heartily pray for the flourishing of the crown, because they live and grow together; and he that is a friend to one, cannot be a foe to the other. His friends are our friends, and his enemies our enemies; for whoever attempts to smite the shepherd<sup>e</sup>, seeks to destroy the flock, and he is a mortal foe to the whole nation<sup>f</sup>. I know nothing so common with rebels and usurpers, as to pretend love to those they would stir up against their lawful prince; but it appears to be ambition and covetousness in the latter end; and such persons design to rise by the fall of many thousands. Or if religion should be the ground of the quarrel, besides our

<sup>e</sup> Si quis ovem jugulat, gregem imminuit; at qui pastorem tollit, omnes dissipat. Chrysost. in 1 Tim. ii.

<sup>f</sup> In reos majestatis et publicos hostes omnis homo miles est. Tertull.

late sad experience, reason will tell us, that war and faction, injustice and cruelty, can never lodge in those breasts where that pure and peaceable quality doth dwell. If it be a foreign prince that opposeth our king, he is a robber and unjust to invade his neighbour's rights; if he be a subject who riseth against his sovereign, he hath renounced Christianity with his allegiance, and is to be esteemed a troubler of our Israel<sup>g</sup>. Therefore whosoever they be that are enemies to the king, or whatsoever the pretence be, we wish they may never prosper in that black impiety of unjust invasion or unchristian rebellion. And how exactly our fidelity and our devotions in this agree with the rites and manners of the first and best Christians, may appear to any discerning person<sup>h</sup>. We know the emperors when heathens, and afterwards, obtained many and great victories by the Christians' prayers; for which cause one of the legions<sup>i</sup> was surnamed *the thundering legion*; and let us pray in hope our prayers shall not be less effectual for a prince of the right faith; so that the enemies of his soul and of his life, the enemies of his crown and dignity, may either be converted, or else discovered, defeated, and deservedly punished; and then we may live in love and peace, and give the glory of our safety to him who strengthens the hands and hearts of all faithful subjects, and gives the victory to his anointed.

<sup>g</sup> Nisi fallor, usurpator bellum infert, imperator jus suum tuetur. Ambr.

<sup>h</sup> Pro piissimo et a Deo conservando imp. nostro omnique palatio et exercitu ejus,—pro quo pugnare Dominum Deum nostrum dignetur et subicere sub pedibus ejus omnem hostem et bellatorem. Liturg. S. Basil.

Ita fere Liturg. Chrys. Exercitus fortes, senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum. Tertul. Apol. cap. 30.—Ut subjectas habeant gentes,—ut amota perturbatione seditionis, succedat lætitia. Ambros. in 1 Tim. ii.

<sup>i</sup> Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 5. cap. 5.

§. XI. AND FINALLY AFTER THIS LIFE, THAT HE MAY ATTAIN EVERLASTING JOY AND FELICITY, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.] Having now wished our prince all the happiness which this world is capable of, we must remember he is mortal, and though never so dear to us, he must be taken from us. His health must end in sickness, his wealth in a sepulchre, his life and his glories here must have an end. For he that conquers all other enemies must add to the number of death's trophies, and fall under the hand of the last enemy. Wherefore we do most heartily pray, that an earthly and transient prosperity may not be all his portion; but that he may so please God in the administration of this temporal authority, that when all these things cease, he may be admitted to that never-ceasing felicity of heaven, to reign in a glorious eternity, crowned with that crown of life which fadeth not away; which doth so infinitely transcend all that an earthly diadem can afford, that the greatest monarchs have renounced their crowns and sceptres, and all the pleasures and magnificence of their courts, and sought after it in the retirements of a poor obscurity, accounting it a blessed exchange to part with earth for heaven, temporals for eternals. There is nothing further in this world we can desire for him; and therefore we pray, that our dear sovereign may never be so deceived with the glories of this golden crown, as to forget, much less neglect or despise, to seek for that glorious crown, which is richer, sweeter, and safer a thousand times; but that he may be happy both in this world and the next, *through Jesus Christ*, who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; by his merits alone, those whose swords can cut them a passage to an earthly throne must be admitted to reign in glory; and he must intercede for those to

whom the world make their petitions. They who by their interest and power can have or do any thing here, must be there accepted *through Jesus Christ*, as well as the meanest of their subjects. Wherefore in his name we ask, and by his mediation we hope to obtain, that our beloved prince may be prosperous and holy, wise and courageous; that he may have a healthful body, a pious soul, a quiet mind, faithful counsellors, loyal subjects, conquering armies, a long life abounding with riches and honour, and at the end of these transient glories, a never-ceasing joy in the kingdom of heaven. And let every good subject and good Christian, whoever loves the church and respects his country, say Amen. Let us pray thus, and live thus, to the honour of God, the establishment of religion, and the welfare of both king and people. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Prayer for the King's Majesty.* 178

O LORD, OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, who art most HIGH in dignity AND MIGHTY in power; to whom should we pray for our earthly governors, but to thee the Supreme KING OF KINGS and the absolute LORD OF LORDS, from whom they derive their authority, and to whom alone they are accountable? Since thou art THE ONLY RULER of the hearts, and examiner of the actions OF PRINCES, we acknowledge thee the King of all the world, WHO DOST FROM the highest heaven THY THRONE, by thy all-sufficient providence take care of, and with thy all-seeing eye BEHOLD ALL THE DWELLERS UPON EARTH, especially thine anointed ones, on whose safety the welfare of the rest depends. In all loyal affection to our king, we most HEARTILY entreat thee, and in all lowly regard to thy glorious Majesty, WE BESEECH THEE by thy particular providence to defend, and WITH THY especial love and FAVOUR TO BEHOLD thy servant and OUR MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN LORD KING CHARLES, that in his safety and happiness we may have peace and comfort: AND SO REPLENISH HIM WITH all holy and virtuous qualities by filling his heart with THE GRACE OF THY HOLY SPIRIT, THAT HE MAY in his counsels and inten-



tions ALWAYS INCLINE to choose that which is agreeable to THY WILL, and in his actions and undertakings ever follow the rule of thy word, AND WALK IN THY WAY. And that he may be fitted for the due administration of so great a charge, ENDUE HIM PLENTEOUSLY WITH the spirit of wisdom and courage, and such an extraordinary measure of all HEAVENLY GIFTS, as may declare him thy anointed. And that he may be every way blessed, GRANT HIM IN HEALTH and safety, plenty AND WEALTH, LONG TO LIVE and prosperously to reign over us; direct, prosper, and STRENGTHEN HIM and his armies, THAT HE MAY VANQUISH AND OVERCOME the policies and forces of ALL HIS and our ENEMIES, who attempt to disturb our peace. AND FINALLY, since the greatest of men, the best of kings, and the longest of worldly joys are finite, grant to our dear sovereign, that AFTER THIS LIFE finished in virtue and honour, HE MAY ATTAIN a crown of glory in the kingdom of EVER-LASTING JOY AND FELICITY, which was purchased by the merits, and must be obtained THROUGH the mediation of JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, to all which we most heartily say, AMEN, be it so.

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*Of the Prayer for the Royal Family.*

§. XII. The learned Selden gives us an ancient Saxon prayer out of a manuscript form, directing the coronation of a queen, whence this prayer seems to have borrowed its beginning, *O Lord, the fountain of all good, and giver of all increase<sup>a</sup>, &c.*; but from whence-soever the rest of this prayer was taken, I am sure it is very proper for this occasion, as the following analysis and discourse will more fully manifest.

<sup>a</sup> Tit. Honour, part i. chap. 8.

*The Analysis of the Prayer for the Royal Family.*

§. XIII. This Prayer hath three parts :	I. The person to whom we pray, described by	1. His power : . . . . .	Almighty God,
		2. His goodness : . . . . .	the fountain of all goodness,
			we humbly beseech thee to bless our gracious queen Catharine, James duke of York, and all the Royal Family :
	II. The persons for whom we pray : . . . . .		Endue them with thy Holy Spirit ; enrich them with thy heavenly grace ;
		1. Spiritual gifts and grace : . . . . .	Prosper them with all happiness ;
		2. Temporal prosperity : . . . . .	and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom ;
	III. The blessings desired for them,	3. Eternal glory : . . . . .	through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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§. XIV. ALMIGHTY GOD, THE FOUNTAIN OF ALL GOODNESS, WE HUMBLY BESEECH THEE TO BLESS OUR GRACIOUS QUEEN CATHARINE, JAMES DUKE OF YORK, AND ALL THE ROYAL FAMILY] There is as near an alliance between this and the former prayer, as between the persons for whom they are made ; so that there will be little to be added, except where this hath something peculiar. And first, it deserves our notice, that God is called here *the Fountain of all goodness*, which is the explication of those scripture phrases, *the well-spring of life and living waters*<sup>b</sup> ; and is an acknowledgment that the God we pray unto is absolute and independent, having all goodness in and from himself, and also inexhaustible ; for though he bestows his blessings liberally and constantly upon all creatures, yet he suffers no diminution or decay. Wherefore though we have now been petitioning for a king who needs extraordinary assistances, and large measure of all kinds of blessings, yet we know this ocean cannot be drawn dry, but can supply the branches as well as the root, and make all that stock

<sup>b</sup> Psal. xxxvi. 9. Jer. ii. 13.

grow and flourish together. The queen and heir to the crown are the fountains from which we hope blessings shall be derived upon after generations. But here we behold there is a higher Fountain, which must first replenish them with all that goodness which they convey to us. The ancient church in their prayers did desire the welfare of the palace and the imperial family<sup>c</sup>, as well as the safety of the emperor. And the practice of the heathens<sup>d</sup> as well as the canons<sup>e</sup> of the Christians do make it appear fit and rational. But if reasons do outweigh examples, we may add, that we are many ways obliged to pray for the queen and the royal family. 1. In regard to the glory of God, whose honour is advanced by the holy example of persons so illustrious, whose dignity, when it is adorned with piety and goodness, may bring virtue into repute, and engage many to imitate them. 2. In duty to the king's majesty, whose comfort will be increased both in the holiness and prosperity of persons so nearly related to him, and so dearly beloved by him. 3. In affection to our country, who in this and future generations will have cause to bless God for these prayers, if they become prevalent; because these are the hopes of succeeding times, and our children may be happy in the religious education of such as are to be the pillars of justice and the patrons of the church hereafter. David had not been so curious in Solomon's education, but that he knew it was not the prince's personal concern alone, but the interest of the whole nation and of all God's people. The Persian kings desired the prayers of the

<sup>c</sup> Domum tutam. Tert. Pro omni palatio. Liturg. S. Basil.

<sup>d</sup> Pontifices, eorumque exemplo cæteri sacerdotes, cum pro incolumitate principis vota susci- perent, Neronem quoque et Dru-

sum iisdem diis commendavere. Tacit. Annal. lib. 4.

<sup>e</sup> Ut pro Domino imperatore cum sua prole orationes et oblationes augeantur. Concil. Rhemens. Can. 40. Ezra vi. 10.

Jews for their sons (Ezra vi. 10.), and chose four of their most wise and virtuous nobility, to whom the education of the prince was committed, who (as Clem. Alexandrinus tells us) were called the *royal tutors*; and we hope the care of those concerned shall be joined to the church's prayers, and then this petition shall be prevalent.

§. XV. ENDUE THEM WITH THY HOLY SPIRIT, ENRICH THEM WITH THY HEAVENLY GRACE; PROSPER THEM WITH ALL HAPPINESS, AND BRING THEM TO THINE EVERLASTING KINGDOM, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN] These particulars are a comprehension of the same blessings in other words which before we desired for the king, even spiritual, temporal, and eternal felicity. The persons we pray for are royally descended, nobly educated, replenished with all honourable endowments, with great riches and vast possessions; yet although they need none of the wealth or honours of this world, we may wish them greater and better things, viz. that their virtue may be parallel to their descent, and their graces equal<sup>f</sup>, nay, excel all other endowments; that they may be rich in 181 good works, so as to gain the love of God, and of all good men: these in the first place. To which we desire it may please God to superadd all outward happiness, that the queen may be fruitful, the prince healthful, and the whole family numerous and fortunate, united in the bonds of an indissoluble love, and that there may never want a man of them to sit upon the throne for ever. Let not evil men be more zealous to cut off these hopes, than we are to pray to God to discover and disappoint them. Let us beg, that we may not provoke him to punish us in the decay of that royal house, the establishment whereof we should wish

<sup>f</sup> Nemo in nostrum gloriam nostrum est; animus facit novixit, nec quod ante nos fuit bilem. Sen. Ep. 44.

more than that of our own families; because the welfare of so many depend upon it, and the consequences of change are dismal and uncertain. Therefore we will heartily pray, they may have all the happiness they can wish in this world, and so enjoy it, that they may not lose the glorious crown of eternity in the world to come, for which no temporal greatness or pleasures can make them satisfaction. Amen.

*The Paraphrase of the Prayer for the Royal Family.*

O ALMIGHTY and all-sufficient Lord GOD, THE FOUNTAIN of life, and inexhaustible spring OF ALL GOODNESS, as we have begged thy blessing for thine Anointed, so also WE HUMBLY BESEECH THEE, in order to his comfort, our own benefit, and the good of future times, continually TO BLESS OUR GRACIOUS QUEEN CATHARINE, and the illustrious prince JAMES DUKE OF YORK, that the succession may be secured by the preservation and increase of these AND ALL the branches of THE ROYAL FAMILY. And that they may please thee, and become blessings to us, ENDUE THEM WITH the best of all endowments THY HOLY SPIRIT, to direct them in all true religion and virtue, and ENRICH THEM WITH the most durable of all riches, THY HEAVENLY GRACE, to make them exemplary and rich in good works; keep them from all traitorous designs, and PROSPER THEM WITH ALL kind of HAPPINESS which this world can afford, to encourage them in well doing; and because this happiness must end, give them at the conclusion thereof a blessed exchange, AND BRING THEM TO THINE EVERLASTING KINGDOM of joy and peace, there to reign with thee for ever, THROUGH the merits and intercession of JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD and only Saviour. AMEN.

## SECTION XXIV.

### OF THE PRAYER FOR THE CLERGY AND PEOPLE.

§. I. ACCORDING to the method in the foregoing verses and responses, having prayed to the Lord to "save the king," we now proceed to beseech him to

“endue the ministers with righteousness,” and also to “save his people and own inheritance;” both which are comprehended in this collect, whose explication followeth :

*The Analysis of the Prayer for the Clergy and People.*

§. II. This prayer hath three parts :	I. The preface, in which God is acknowledged in	1. His excellent attributes : . . . . .	<i>Almighty and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels ;</i>
		2. His wonderful works :	
	II. The petitions, expressing	1. For whom we pray,	1. Clergy : . . . . .
			2. People : . . . . .
		2. For what we pray,	1. Grace to fit them for duty : . . . . .
			2. A blessing on their endeavours : . . . . .
	III. The argument to enforce them : . . . . .		<i>Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ. Amen.</i>

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§. III. ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD, WHO ALONE WORKEST GREAT MARVELS] As we have made our supplications before for our temporal governors, that under them we may have all those outward blessings which will make our lives comfortable here; so we now continue to pray for our spiritual guides, that with them we may receive all those graces and inward blessings which will make our souls happy hereafter. We are members of the church as well as the state, so that we must pray for those things which are requisite to the preservation and felicity of both, jointly and severally, since they mutually support each other. And as the union of men into polities and civil societies is designed for the securing our bodies and estates, and the obtaining of external prosperity; so the union of Christians into one spirit by one faith, and into one body by the

bonds of love, is intended by God for the edification of our souls, and the securing our eternal inheritance. Wherefore let us remember our mystical as well as political union, our souls as well as our bodies, and most devoutly imitate the best examples in calling<sup>a</sup> upon God for his church; and especially for the ministers thereof, as the scripture enjoins us<sup>b</sup>, and as the apostle St. Paul so often particularly entreats those he writes unto to<sup>c</sup> do. And for this we have in all ages many testimonies of holy men, who both in their public and private worship did ever beg for the peace and welfare of the church, more than for any of their private concerns. With which noble spirit if our breasts be possessed, this excellent form is here daily presented to us, to be offered to God with fervent affections, which is so contrived that the very method and phrase, if duly considered, may furnish us with many affecting meditations to improve our devotion in the use of it. The introduction sets God before us in those admirable attributes and wonderful works, which declare him every way fit to be called upon for his church, and mind us what he hath done for it. It is he that first gathered his church out of obstinate Jews and ignorant heathens by his almighty power; and who hath by the same omnipotence either preserved it from, or supported it against, the malice of Satan, the rage of persecutors, the subtlety of heretics, and the blind zeal of factious dividers: so that it continues to this very day, and shall do to the end of the world, because our Redeemer ever lives to intercede for us, and hath promised to be with us<sup>d</sup> for ever. Our God is everlasting,

<sup>a</sup> John xvii. 20. Deut. xxxiii.

11.

<sup>b</sup> Psal. cxxxii. 9. Ephes. vi.

18, 19.

<sup>c</sup> Coloss. vi. 3. 1 Thess. v. 25.

<sup>d</sup> Matt. xvi. 18. et xxviii. ult.

Heb. vii. 25. Græc. Εἰς τὸ παν-  
τελές. Omnis ecclesia quæ fit  
propter Deum, firma perman-  
bit. Dict. Rab.

and the duration of the church relies on the indeficiency of the divine nature, which ever lives and ever loves it, and is as powerful and sufficient to support and supply it now, as ever in former ages. History can describe, and our fathers can tell us, what marvellous works he hath done for the benefit thereof, how many miracles he wrought for the confirmation of his truth, the conviction of its enemies, and the strengthening of the members thereof. In the first times he did wonderfully inspire the apostles with the Holy Ghost and power to work miracles, by which<sup>e</sup> their successors were distinguished for some time, till the world did believe. And afterwards, though the operation were not so visible, (because it was not so necessary<sup>f</sup>,) yet the assistance is as sure, for that is as requisite now as ever; and the blessing upon our endeavours is as advantageous and more suitable to the present condition of the church. For the greatest of all wonders (which some prefer to the creation of light out of the darkness) is not yet ceased, viz. the conversion of sinners by that which the profane world accounts *the foolishness of preaching*, and then who dares deny, but God *works great marvels still*, though not in so magnificent a way? O therefore let us call upon this almighty and everlasting God, that<sup>184</sup> he will marvellously assist his ministers, and wonderfully bless his people under them; that it may appear that he who of old was visibly present with his church by miracles, may be now perceived to be still among us by extraordinary assistances and admirable success bestowed on his servants.

<sup>e</sup> Acts ii. 4. et ix. 17. et xix. 6. 2 Tim. i. 6. 1 Tim. i. 18. Κατὰ τὰς προαγούσας προφητείας, hoc est, οὐκ ἀνθρωπίνη ψήφῳ. Chrysost. Πνεύματος πρυστάζει οἱ ἐπίσκοποι καὶ οὐ χύδην. Œcum. in loc.

<sup>f</sup> Τῆς δυνάμεως τῶν σημείων οὐδ' ἔχνος ὑπολείπεται. Chrysost. lib. 4. de sacerdotio. Necessaria fuerunt antequam crederet mundus ad hoc ut crederet. Aug. Civ. Dei, 22.



§. IV. SEND DOWN UPON OUR BISHOPS AND CURATES, AND ALL CONGREGATIONS COMMITTED TO THEIR CHARGE, THE HEALTHFUL SPIRIT OF THY GRACE] This prayer being made for the whole church, doth here exactly enumerate the several parts of which it doth consist, bishops, ministers, and saints<sup>e</sup>, in St. Paul's phrase, all which do make a church. And in the ancient Liturgies all these degrees are particularly mentioned<sup>b</sup> and prayed for; though the same thing be asked for them all, the salutary spirit of the divine grace, of which every one of them stands in need, and the consideration of their several places and offices will be the best guide and help to our affectionate putting up this petition. First, the bishops, who as they have the highest dignity in the church, so they have the greatest charge, being to oversee both the people and the ministers. So that by being advanced above all, they become servants unto all<sup>i</sup>, and on them as on the apostles<sup>k</sup> lies *the care of all the churches*. They are to endeavour to preserve the church in peace and prosperity, by electing fit persons into the ministry, and ordering the externals of divine worship with decency, and to edification; by preventing heresies and schisms among the clergy; by inquiring into and censuring all public crimes both in clergy and people; and by consulting upon occasion about the most important affairs of church and state, which is a burden for the shoulders of an angel. And if we con-

g Phil. i. 1. Τοῖς ἁγίοις—ὁὐν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις. Ecclesia, plebs sacerdoti adunata et pastori suo grex adhærens. S. Cyprian. Epist. 69.

<sup>b</sup> Pro archiepiscopo nostro N. honorifico sacerdotio, in Christi ministerio, et omni clero et populo, Dominum postulemus. Liturg. S. Basil.

<sup>i</sup> Ne te efferas, officium tibi

non potestas injungitur, hodie incipiendum tibi servire omnibus. Grotius in Matt. xx. Asserit Judæos captivos ita loqui ad Ethnarcham suum. Vid. Matt. xx. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 19. Apud nos qui imperant serviunt iis quibus videntur imperare. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. 19. cap. 14.

<sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 18. Græc. Μέ-  
ριμα πασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν.

sider how necessary and beneficial this office is to us<sup>1</sup>, and how impossible to be duly performed without extraordinary measures of the Spirit of grace, we shall no doubt earnestly beg it for all of this sacred order, especially for him whom we live under, whom though we do not here (as the ancients did) mention by name, yet we must daily remember with a particular affection. Secondly, curates, by which we are not to understand stipendiary persons, but all the inferior clergy, to whom the bishops do commit the *curam animarum*, cure or charge of souls. Which name, however abused by vulgar acceptance, minds us of the original of those we now call *ministers*. For at first the sole charge of every city and the adjacent parts lay upon the bishop, till by the increase of the faithful it became necessary for him to take unto himself certain *curatores*, deputies, to whom he committed the office of instructing, reserving to himself the rights of government and superiority, (as is excellently proved by some of our own authors;) and these (acting as the seventy with and under Moses, and) taking part of the burden on them, are therefore properly called here by the name of *curates*. And let all that have undertaken this weighty charge most devoutly pray for themselves and all their brethren, and all the faithful people of God join with us in so doing. For our office is to catechize and instruct the ignorant, to exhort and encourage the good, to rebuke and convince sinners, to confirm the doubting, to win the gainsaying, to comfort the sad, visit the sick, to preach to our congregations, to pray with and for them, to administer the holy sacraments, and, in a

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiæ salus in summi sacerdotis [i. e. episcopi] dignitate consistit; cui si non exors quædam, et ab omnibus detur

potestas, tot efficientur schismata quot sacerdotes. Hier. advers. Lucifer.

word, to take care of the souls of the living, and bury the bodies of the dead. Wherefore the prayers of Christ's flock had need be fervent for us; since this cannot be done without the aid of the Spirit of grace: especially because ministers must be able to teach their auditors by the innocence of their lives<sup>m</sup> as well as by the vastness of their learning; and had need be free of the crimes with which they charge others, lest their reproofs become their own reproach, rather than their neighbour's amendment. Lastly, the people who are to hear and learn from these spiritual guides must be prayed for; that they may be open to instruction, easy 185 to advice, gentle upon reproofs, willing to learn and receive God's word, diligent to practise it, and full of all benign dispositions, and replenished with justice, charity, and devotion. Remember (holy brethren) how seriously God and his Spirit hath charged you with his people, and how strictly he will require them from you, so that if through your default any perish<sup>n</sup>, you are accountable to God for them. Consider how ineffectual both your prayers and instructions<sup>o</sup> will be, unless the Spirit of grace bless them; and then you will pray heartily for your congregation. And let them who are to suck these breasts pray for a healthful nurse; a pious, painful, zealous, and knowing pastor: nay, let us all, ministers and people, desire with and for one another, that *Spirit of saving grace*, that may make the whole body of the church healthful, and every member strong, active, and useful in its place<sup>p</sup>. That the gover-

<sup>m</sup> Non statim boni sacerdotis est, aut tantummodo innocenter agere, aut tantummodo scienter prædicare; cum et innocens tantum sibi proficit, nisi doctus sit, et doctus siue doctrinæ sit auctoritate, nisi innocens sit. Hilar. Pict. de Trin. lib. 8.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Kings xx. 39. Ezek. xiii. 9.  
<sup>o</sup> Magisteria forinsecus adjutoria quædam sunt; cathedram in cælo habet, qui corda docet. Aug. in Epist. Johan. Tract. 4.

<sup>p</sup> Titus ii. 11. Vatab. Gratia salutaris, &c. See Psal. cxxxii. 16.

nors may be prudent, the ministers faithful, and the people diligent, and all of them ready and vigorous for the duties of religion and every good work.

§. V. AND THAT THEY MAY TRULY PLEASE THEE, POUR UPON THEM THE CONTINUAL DEW OF THY BLESSING] As the grace of God is requisite to fit all the members of Christ's church for their several offices and duties; so his blessing is necessary to make their labours prosperous. Man is called by Philo the celestial plant, having his root reversed<sup>q</sup>, and seeming to grow from heaven. And herein the comparison holds, that as plants require the influence of heaven to quicken them, and the dew thereof to moisten them; so those which are set in the church (the garden of God) require the salutary Spirit of grace to make them live, and the irrigations of the divine blessing to make them spring and bring forth fruit. It is not from our pains nor your diligence alone that success must come, *not from him that plants, nor him that waters, but from God that gives the increase*, 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6. Whole buckets of water poured on by the hand of man will not so much refresh the plant, as the gentler showers and dew from above; wherefore the dew is used to express plenty and abundant increase<sup>r</sup>, particularly in knowledge<sup>s</sup>, of which *the dew falling from the clouds* was the hieroglyphic among the Egyptians. Let us then most passionately gasp for this prolific dew, that we may not only please God by our constant and ready attendances upon prayers and other offices, but truly and thoroughly please him by our fruitfulness under these means; let it appear, by our humility and charity, our justice and

<sup>q</sup> Ἀνθρώπον μόνον φυτὸν οὐράνιον, — τὰς τροφὰς ὀλυμπίους καὶ ἀφθάρτους, ἀλλὰ μὴ γεώδεις καὶ φθαρτὰς ἔχῃ. L. de insid. pejor.

<sup>r</sup> Gen. xxvii. 28. Deut. xxxiii.

18, 28. Hosea xiv. 5.

<sup>s</sup> Deut. xxxii. 1. Ægyptii eruditionem indicantes, cælum pingunt rorem fundens. Caussin. Hieroglyph. Hor. Apol. 35.

innocence, by the success of the ministers, and the improvement of every congregation, that we do not receive the grace of God in vain. For he is ready to give his blessing, if we be fit to receive it; he will not only sprinkle, but pour it on us; because we need large measures, and that not only at some seasons, but continually, at both the morning and evening sacrifice, lest affliction or temptation should wither us. O! what soul doth not long to be thus watered, since none can fructify without it, nor can any die or be barren that doth enjoy it! Let us humbly pray that the good orders of our bishops, the prayers and exhortations of our ministers, and the constant attendances of our people, may thus be watered from above, that we may bring forth an hundredfold, and send forth a pleasant savour of good works<sup>t</sup> like the fields of Palestina, when watered from the celestial springs. And so shall every member of Christ's church live and grow and flourish, than which nothing is more desirable.

§. VI. GRANT THIS, O LORD, FOR THE HONOUR OF OUR ADVOCATE AND MEDIATOR JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.] We must not allow either the clergy or people to ask these petitions with any designs to advance their own glory, or to become famous for their gifts or graces. For the end must be the manifestation of the glories of our Advocate and Mediator, who at his triumphant ascension gave divine gifts<sup>u</sup> unto men, and accounts those who are endued with them as so many rays of his glory<sup>x</sup>. It is Jesus who obtains by his pleading at the throne of grace, both the spirit and the blessing for us, and it is he that bestows both upon the church, for

<sup>t</sup> Et cum a siccitate continua, immaduerit imbre, tunc emittit illum suum halitum divinum, ex sole conceptum, cui comparari suavitas nulla potest. Plin. lib.

17. cap. 5. Gen. xxvii. 27.

<sup>u</sup> Ephes. iv. 8.

<sup>x</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 23. Sunt Christi gloria, quia nihil habent nisi dono Christi. Calvin.

which he once gave his body, and on which he ever sets his love. Let him have the honour of all the holy and religious performances of his church; and let us earnestly desire, that by the flourishing of this his body all the world may see the prevalency of his intercession with God, the sincerity of his love to his servants, his continual care of them, and bounty to them; which will surely cause all people to advance and magnify his holy name. Nothing is more the honour of Jesus now in heaven, than that his church be ruled with pious and wise governors, his ordinances administered by zealous and holy ministers, and all places abounding with religious, loyal, and charitable people. And what argument will sooner open the ears and pierce the heart of the Father of mercies, whose great design is to glorify his dear and only Son? This declares, that our petitions herein comply with his eternal purposes. We see the dishonour of some distempered members seems to reflect upon the head; and we are grieved for it, desiring sincerely the holy Jesus may have (as he deserves) all glory by the holiness and prosperity of his church, and we hope that heaven will say Amen hereto.

*The Paraphrase of the Prayer for the Clergy and People.*

O Lord, who art ALMIGHTY in power AND EVERLASTING in duration, who hast promised to be ever with thy church, we acknowledge thou art the GOD WHO ALONE WORKEST wonders in the calling, and hast ever shewed GREAT MARVELS for the preservation thereof in all ages; wherefore we beseech thee to SEND DOWN from above suitable gifts and graces upon all estates of men in the catholic church. Particularly UPON OUR BISHOPS, to direct them in the governing, upon our ministers AND CURATES, to assist them in the feeding of thy flock; AND also upon ALL CONGREGATIONS of Christian men and women, whose souls thou hast COMMITTED TO THEIR CHARGE: and that the account may be given up to the minister's com-

fort, and the profit of thy church, let them all be inspired with THE HEALTHFUL and saving SPIRIT OF THY GRACE, to fit them for, and assist them in, all religious duties. AND THAT THEY all in their several places MAY TRULY PLEASE THEE by a right use of this grace, do thou plentifully POUR UPON THEM in all holy offices the effectual and the CONTINUAL DEW OF THY BLESSING, that thy messengers' pains may be successful, and thy people's lives fruitful in all good works. GRANT THIS which we ask of thee, O LORD, not to advance our own fame, but FOR THE HONOUR OF him that is OUR ADVOCATE AND MEDIATOR, whose peculiar glory it is to be able to obtain these blessings for thy church ; hear us, therefore, not only for the benefit of thy church, but for the glory of thy dear Son JESUS CHRIST, to whose intercession for us do thou say AMEN.

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## SECTION XXV.

## OF THE PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

§. I. THE excellent composers of our Liturgy were so far from affectation of novelty, that when the ancient offices did afford them proper forms, they did not make new ones ; wherefore they have taken this prayer *verbatim* out of the Greek Liturgies ; and that none could have been more fit for this place, will appear by a more particular consideration thereof.

*The Analysis of the Prayer of St. Chrysostom.*

§. II. In this prayer are two parts :	I. The ground of our asking, considering	{	1. The experience of God's grace :.....	{	<i>Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee ; and dost promise, that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests :</i>		
			2. The truth of his promise :.....				
	II. The petition or thing asked ; hearing our prayers, as to	{	1. The matter :.....	{	<i>Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them ; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting, Amen.</i>		
			2. The manner :.....				
			3. The principal requests,			1. To know God : ..	
						{	2. To enjoy him :...

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§. III. ALMIGHTY GOD, WHO HAST GIVEN US GRACE AT THIS TIME WITH ONE ACCORD TO MAKE OUR COMMON SUPPLICATIONS UNTO THEE] This excellent conclusion of our prayers that bears the name of its renowned author, was well known to the Greek church ; for it is still found extant in the Liturgies both of St. Chrysostom and St. Basil. And yet its own worth might sufficiently recommend it, if it wanted the reputation of those honourable names. For it is founded on our own experience, and the certainty of his promise who is infallible ; it is carried on with such submission to the divine will, and designed so to our advantage, that nothing can be more judiciously contrived, or more pertinently applied to this close of our devotion. Where it seems to review and reinforce all our former petitions, to revive our hopes of acceptance, and encourage our zeal in them, yet so as to represent our necessities in the most humble and lowly manner, with submission to his wisdom, who best knows what is most expedient



for us. We may now reflect upon those many necessary and useful prayers which we have offered up to God with an unanimous consent, and a hearty devotion; and it is fit we should pay our grateful acknowledgments for that grace which hath assisted us therein. For there are no clearer evidences of the presence of the Divine Spirit in our prayers, than the sincere agreement and harmonious accord of our souls in the joint oblation of them<sup>a</sup>, and the fervent affections that every one in particular hath added to them. It is his grace that hath bound our arrows together by the bonds of love, and hath directed them to pierce the clouds by a vigorous and steady zeal. And we have the surer ground to believe he hath assisted us, and the greater cause to praise him for it, in regard these are no other than our common prayers and ordinary supplications, which have no novelties or varieties to court our fancies, but yet have been made new to us by a fresh supply of his heavenly grace, which hath kindled our accustomed sacrifice with new flames. And if we well consider, the effects of God's grace are rather to be judged by the heart than the tongue, by renewed affections rather than change of expressions. And to be sure nothing but a new sense of our old wants can give life to these petitions. Wherefore as we daily receive new succours, let us daily make new acknowledgments; that as we have the comfort of our union and zeal, so he who bestows them may have the glory. And yet this is not all the use we must make of the experience which we have had of his enabling us to pray; for it must strengthen our faith, and quicken our hope that we shall be heard. For he that helps us to ask, thereby assures us he intends to give<sup>b</sup>. *He prepares the*

<sup>a</sup> Acts i. 14. et iv. 24. Græc. ὁμοθυμαδόν.

<sup>b</sup> Matt. xxv. 25. Psal. x. 17.

*heart, and then his ear attends thereunto.* The first step towards the obtaining of a blessing, is the giving us a heart devoutly to ask for it<sup>c</sup>. Which desire he would not create, if he did not intend to fulfil it. Therefore we may lay this as a foundation, on which we may cheerfully request his gracious acceptance of those prayers which he hath quickened us unto, by a new devotion.

§. IV. AND DOST PROMISE THAT WHEN TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN THY NAME, THOU WILT GRANT THEIR REQUESTS] But that we may not doubt of the prevalency of our petitions, nor go away from the throne of grace with sad hearts, we have not only grounds of hope from the operations of the Spirit (which are secret, and not always so discernible) but from an infallible promise made by him who is truth itself, and in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen. Which assureth us that the united requests of his people, who meet and pray in his name, can never miscarry, (Matt. xviii. 19, 20.) For Jesus is so highly delighted in the unions and unanimous societies of the faithful, that if but *two of them<sup>d</sup> agree on earth to ask any thing, it shall be given them, and wheresoever two or three are gathered together* 189 *in his name, he is<sup>e</sup> in the midst of them.* Not, he *will be*, but he *is* there before they come, ready to receive their supplications; and whoever meet in his house of prayer, shall find he is present amongst them<sup>f</sup> by the

<sup>c</sup> Signum futuræ impetrationis est quando Spiritus S. movet ad petendum cum fiducia et quasi securitate impetrandi. Cassian. coll. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Ubi duo considerant sermonem habentes de lege, Schechinah est inter ipsos. R.R. ap. Drus. Non multitudini sed unitati plurimum tribuendum. Cypr. de unit. Eccles.

<sup>e</sup> Non dicit ero, non enim tardat aut cunctatur, sed jam sum (i. e. illic inveniar) præsens gratia et favore singulari. Luc. Bruggens.

<sup>f</sup> Psal. lxvi. 6. Deus in medio illorum esse dicitur quibus exhibet gratiosæ suæ præsentiæ testimonia. Ravan. Thes. Bib. vid. Deut. vii. 21. Josh. iii. 10.

communications of his grace, and his answering their prayers. For the granting our requests (as you may here observe) is the paraphrase of Jesus his being with us; and the best testimony of his being among us is the granting our desires. And this way we wish our blessed Lord may manifest himself to us, who are *gathered together in his name*<sup>g</sup>, that is, in obedience to his command and authority, in hopes of and trust in his power and aid, to pay our homage to him, to declare our faith in him, and to own our dependance upon him. Wherefore his own promise doth oblige him to hear us. Sometimes the congregation is very numerous, and he that will hear so few, will (as an ancient notes) much rather receive those requests to which so many have unanimously and devoutly said Amen. But if there be but few, (as to the shame of this nation is too often seen,) the wickedness of the neglecters ought not to reproach the piety of those that are present; nor is it safe for men to despise them for their paucity, since Jesus disdains not the smallest number. The Jewish masters indeed teach, that ten is the least number<sup>h</sup> to make an assembly fit for the divine presence. But our gracious Lord descends lower, even unto two or three, that none might be discouraged by the negligence of their brethren. And now be we never so few, if we be unanimous and devout, what comfort will this promise leave upon our spirits in the close of our prayers, which ascend to heaven with privilege and authority! When they are backed with his promise, they cannot fail. Who would not lay aside all occasions, and run every day to meet with Jesus, who is sure to be found in the

<sup>g</sup> Acts iv. 7. compared with Matt. xxi. 23. 1 Sam. xvii. 45. Psal. xx. 8.

<sup>h</sup> Quando decem homines in-

trant domum synagogæ, divinitas est cum illis: dicunt enim in Talm., Decem faciunt cœtum. Ita Rab. Salom. in Num. xiv. 27.

temple? And who would not love these devotions in which so many thousands do agree? And who (that believes the truth of Jesus) can doubt of a gracious return to them? If you find but few of your brethren at church, yet you shall find him whom your soul seeks there; and by his grace and his answers you shall find he hath been with you and left a blessing behind him.

§. V. FULFIL NOW, O LORD, THE DESIRES AND PETITIONS OF THY SERVANTS, AS MAY BE MOST EXPEDIENT FOR THEM] Having so good grounds to believe he hath been present with us, both from the experience of his assistance, and the certainty of his promise, we are taught now to speak to the holy Jesus, as it were face to face, to apply ourselves to him, as if he stood before us; beseeching him who enabled us to put up these requests, and hath been among us, and heard them all along, to make good his promise, and, as he was nigh unto us when we called on him, that he will *fulfil the desires* of us that fear him<sup>i</sup>. Desires and petitions are empty things, the hunger and thirst of the soul, and when the Divine Bounty satisfies these desires, he is said to fill us; for food is not more pleasing to a hungry body, than the desire accomplished<sup>k</sup> is to a longing soul. Therefore we beseech him who hears the petitions of our mouths, and also discerns the meditations of our hearts, that he will fulfil all our wishes, as holy David prays, Psalm xix. 14. And as he often in the Book of Psalms<sup>l</sup> makes desires and petitions the two parts of his prayers, so do we, taking the petitions for the words of these holy forms, even that which we have asked with our lips in express terms. And by *the desires*, we mean those enlargements of our soul into

<sup>i</sup> Psal. cxiv. 18, 19.    <sup>k</sup> Prov. xiii. 19.    <sup>l</sup> Psal. xx. 4, 6. xxi. 2.

secret thoughts and affectionate wishes, which were too big to be delivered at our mouths, but were begotten in our hearts by the Spirit of God: and perhaps by occasion of some meditations suggested in these pages. Which desires are the wings to our petitions, the life of our sacrifice, and the particular application of these general requests to the state of our own souls, which he that kneels next to us cannot discern, but our Lord Jesus both sees and will fulfil these as well as those petitions, which were the ground of such devout enlargements. He will grant both, if it be expedient for us; but because we are so unable to judge what is for our real advantage, we must not too peremptorily require that he should give us all we wish or pray for. We may ask for evil things, or for good things which may be evil for us<sup>m</sup>; or we may desire them unseasonably, immoderately, or to evil purposes, and then it were cruelty to hear us, and it is the greatest kindness to deny us. Let us therefore learn from the example of Christ himself to submit our will to the will of God<sup>n</sup>, and learn from a heathen to give God leave to choose for us; who being infinite in wisdom and goodness, knows what is fittest for us, and when, and where, and in what manner, and what measures to bestow it. So that if we leave it to him, we shall have all mercies with infinite advantages, when we are fittest for them, and when they will do us most good. Whereupon we must resolve, though our petitions and desires be earnest, yet they shall not be arrogant nor presumptuous, but shall learn humbly to submit unto, and patiently

<sup>m</sup> Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt Dii—cæca magnaue cupidine ducti: Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris; at illis Notum, qui pueri, qualis que futura sit uxor. Juv. Sat.

x. 349. Exorari in perniciem rogantium, sæva benignitas.

<sup>n</sup> Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ τὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ καὶ εὐχομένοις καὶ ἀνεύκτοις Ἄμμυ δίδου, τὰ δὲ δεινὰ καὶ εὐχομένοις ἀπαλέξειν.

to wait upon our heavenly Father's order and appointment.

§. VI. GRANTING US IN THIS WORLD KNOWLEDGE OF THY TRUTH, AND IN THE WORLD TO COME LIFE EVERLASTING. AMEN] To know God here by faith, and to behold him hereafter and enjoy him, is the sum of our true happiness. And therefore we need not positively pray for any thing else, but may be so far indifferent as to all other things, as to leave it to our gracious Master to give or deny us those things according as he sees most expedient; provided these two be secured, *to know God here, and to enjoy him hereafter*. These we must crave however, and desire all other blessings may be subordinate to these, and so given to us, that neither of these be hindered or impaired. Or we may consider, that since Jesus hath promised to hear all these our prayers, we beseech him to confirm his word in granting them, that we may have a further experimental *knowledge of the truth* of his promises. In this world we need his daily help, and do every day most humbly desire it, and if he please to answer us according to his promise, it will give us such constant and fresh testimonies of his being our true and never-failing friend, that we shall still trust more strongly in him, and come more cheerfully to him, till at last nothing can separate us from his love. And thus we being daily bound by new experiences of his favour, shall become faithful to the death, and then we cannot fail of the crown of life. And we may enforce all our foregoing petitions by representing to the holy Jesus the great advantages we shall have by his daily *fulfilling our desires and petitions*; for besides the things we ask for, hereby we shall acquire such confirmation to our faith, and such evidences of his truth, as will secure us in his love while we live in this world, and bring us

to the fulness of glory and felicity in the world to come; therefore, dear Jesus, hear us and answer us to our endless comfort. Amen. Be it so.

*A Paraphrase of the Prayer of St. Chrysostom.*

We acknowledge thy goodness, O ALMIGHTY GOD, who remembering our inability to serve thee HAST GIVEN US, that sweet and efficacious assistance of thy GRACE AT THIS TIME, which hath enabled us WITH ONE ACCORD and a fervent devotion TO MAKE OUR addresses to thee with new affections. Even in the presenting these our daily and COMMON SUPPLICATIONS UNTO THEE, we confess thou hast helped us to ask, and therefore hope thou intendest to give, and the rather because thou hast assured us AND DOST PROMISE, THAT WHEN TWO OR THREE, even the smallest number of the faithful, in obedience to thy command, ARE GATHERED TOGETHER to offer up their united prayers to the Father IN THY NAME, they shall find thee present in the midst of them, for THOU WILT GRANT THEIR REQUESTS. Wherefore, since we have called upon thee by thine aid, and are assembled in thy name, FULFIL NOW, O LORD, unto us this gracious promise, and mercifully accept THE DESIRES and meditations which have been sent from the hearts, the prayers AND PETITIONS uttered from the mouths OF THY SERVANTS, supplying their wants with the best things, and at the fittest times, AS MAY BE judged by thy infinite wisdom MOST EXPEDIENT FOR THEM. But however thou dealest in all other things, let the interest of our souls be secured both here and hereafter, by thy GRANTING US IN THIS WORLD daily experiments and further KNOWLEDGE OF THY TRUTH, in the fulfilling of thy promises and the granting of our prayers; that so we may never forsake thee here, AND IN THE WORLD TO COME our happiness shall be completed by thy bringing us there to LIFE EVERLASTING, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

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2 Cor. xiii. ult.

§. VII. THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY GHOST, BE WITH US ALL EVERMORE. AMEN] In all religious assemblies it hath been the custom to dismiss the

people with a blessing, which was wont to be pronounced by the principal person present<sup>p</sup>, sometimes by the king<sup>q</sup>, but most commonly by the priests<sup>r</sup>, whose office was to bless in the name of the Lord. And therefore under the law there was a particular form of benediction, which the Jews to this day observe so religiously, that they believe it ought to be repeated in the holy tongue<sup>s</sup>, and to be received by the people with all reverence, bowing their heads and prostrating their bodies; so that no man may presume to look upon the priests' hands when they are stretched out to give it, because, they say, the glory of God rests then upon them. And in the Christian church also they ever concluded with a blessing, (it is likely the same we now use, being indited by the Holy Spirit, and used by St. Paul in the close of his Epistle to the Corinthians,) concerning which it was ordered, "that the assembly should bow their heads when it was pronounced<sup>t</sup>." And it was decreed by a council, "that none might depart out of the church till it was given." But to give a greater strength to these orders, let us consider the excellency of this divine blessing, and sure its own perfections will oblige us to stay for it, and engage us to receive it with all devotion and reverence. The legal benediction was no more but a wish for temporal felicity; but this contains the whole order of our salvation, and brings in the glorious Trinity with the several gifts of each Person to make us completely happy. The Father indeed is first in order, but we begin with *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that is, the benefits pur-

<sup>p</sup> Heb. vii. 7.

<sup>q</sup> 2 Sam. vi. 18. 1 Kings viii.

55.

<sup>r</sup> Num. vi. 23, 24, &c.

<sup>s</sup> Fagius in Num. vi. Buxtorf. Synag. cap. xiv. See Nehem. viii. 6.

<sup>t</sup> Κλινόντων αὐτῶν τὰς κεφαλὰς εὐλογεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐπίσκοπος. Clem. Constit. Ante benedictionem sacerdotis, egredi populus non præsumat. Concil. Agath. Can. 31.



chased by his passion; because he is the first mover in our acceptance, and obtains both the *love of God* the Father, and the *communication of the Holy Ghost*. What can the pious soul ask or desire which is not comprehended in this blessing? Here is *the grace* of the Son to pardon our sin, *the love* of the Father to supply our wants, *the fellowship* of the blessed Spirit to strengthen our weakness. The first to redeem us, the second to preserve us, the third to sanctify us: and all these not only at this present, but to be confirmed to us, and remain with us, even when we are gone from the holy place, in life and death, and for ever. Nor are these only desired, but they are pronounced over us by the ambassador of God, whom he hath sent to bless in his name. And this minister of heaven being cheered with observing our devotion, doth from his soul wish, and ministerially (as far as in him lies) dispense, these unspeakable blessings to us. And what he doth on earth shall be ratified in heaven to every truly holy man. O let us bow our heads and open our hearts to receive this universal blessing as from God himself, and depart from the holy place full of comfort and joy, that we have such a preservative against all evil, and such a guide and encouragement to all good, even the *blessing of God to be with us* and remain upon us *for ever*: and to this let all the people say, Amen.

*The Blessing paraphrased.*

Let THE GRACE purchased for us by the death OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST procure our absolution, AND THE LOVE OF GOD the Father seal our justification, AND THE FELLOWSHIP and communication of the graces OF THE HOLY GHOST perfect our sanctification. And let all these at present BE WITH US, and rest upon us ALL EVERMORE. AMEN.













